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THE MAGAZINE OF THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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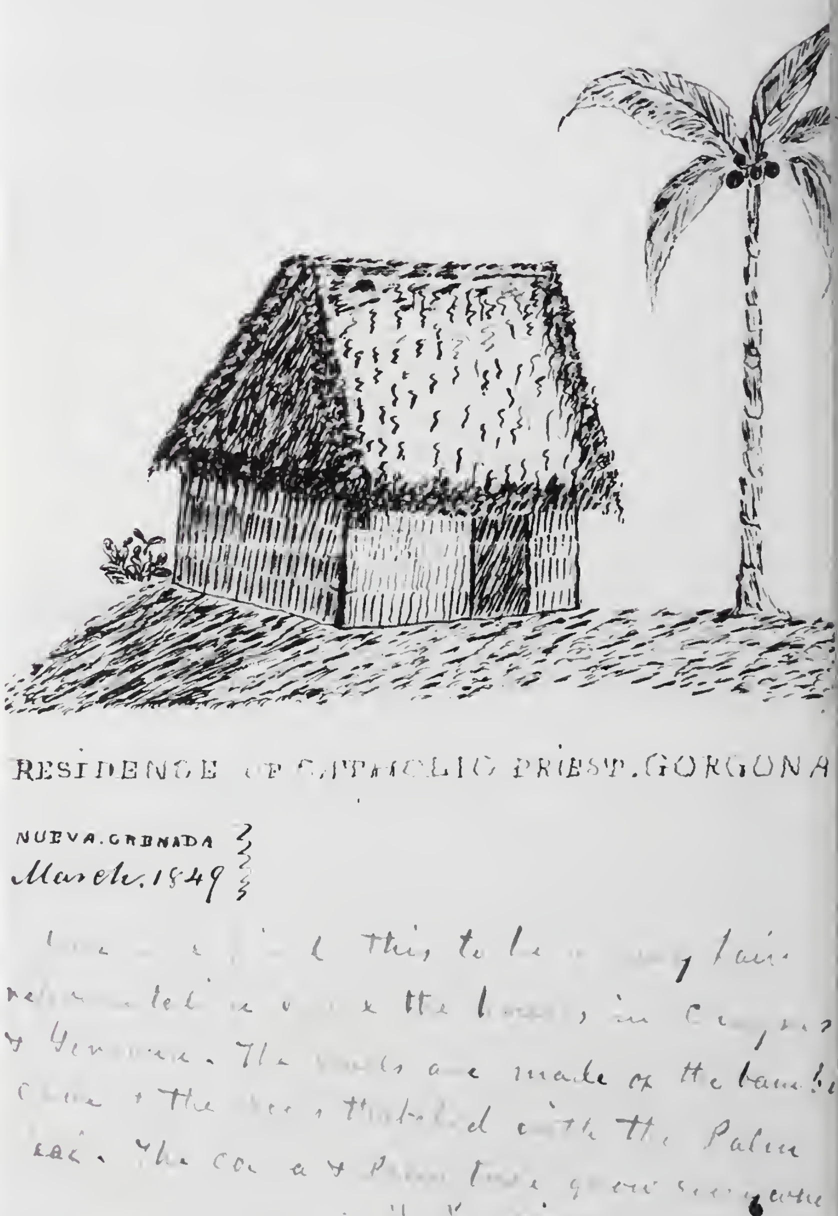
R. P. Effinger's Excellent Adventure

The Unknown Letters of a Young Ohio Lawyer

Little did Robert Patterson Effinger know, when in March 1849 he threw in with thousands of other ordinary American men, that he was propelling himself from home, family, and a good life into an extraordinary adventure. Yes, the Gold Rush was on, and though he was a forty-niner, he was no miner; a searcher or an investigator might be a better characterization. Setting off from his comfortable and prosperous home down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans, and thence via the Isthmus of Panama to the Pacific and by steam north to California, Effinger, a twenty-three-year-old lawyer from Lancaster, Ohio, entered an international arena with eyes wide open.

As the letters excerpted in this special issue of *California History* demonstrate, Effinger was a regular guy living under a lucky star, hailing from a warm and close family circle, blessed with a university education, endowed with a great deal of good sense, and motivated by a strong desire to better his personal finances. Good fortune shone upon him, as he revealed in the letters he wrote to his close-knit family—to his mom and to his brothers and sisters, sister-in-law and niece—back in Lancaster. Never convinced that the way to get


RESIDENCE OF CATHOLIC PRIEST. GORGONA
NUEVA GRENADA
March, 1849

In thirty-two neatly penned letters, R. P. Effinger reported to the folks back home in Lancaster, Ohio, on his splendid adventures taking part in the California Gold Rush.

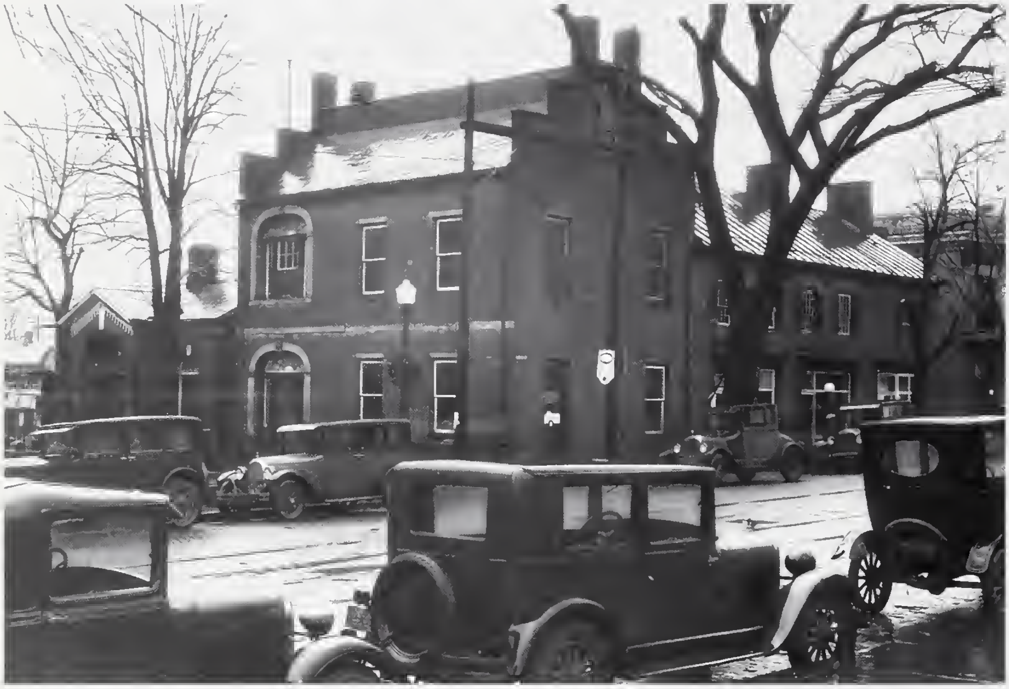
ahead was by mining, Effinger sought the opportunities to make some money and to see the elephant by keeping a lookout for the main chance and by using his head.

And so he did. He attached himself to the U. S. Boundary Commission, which was charged with determining and marking the international line between Mexico and the United States, as specified in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, all the way from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. An endeavor of enormous consequence, this was the first large-scale project in the West for the Corps of Topographical Engineers to apply its geodetic and topographical expertise. Establishing the border was a public project fraught with uncertainties and challenges: the team worked side by side with officials from the Mexican Commission, who understandably displayed wounded national pride; the project was a joint operation of civilian and military staff headed by a political appointee; and all were answerable to the State Department in Washington. The job itself—to run and mark the line—as specified in Article V of the treaty that ended hostilities in the Mexican-American War, was no easy task. The United States wanted to assure a southwestern railroad route and also wanted the port of San Diego included in U.S. territory. For Mexico, the city of El Paso had to be retained in the national patrimony because a huge amount of its territory was ceded to the United States. There was not even one map in existence that provided the degree of accuracy necessary for the job at hand, the commissions were operating under a deadline imposed by the treaty, and the work of the survey was complicated by Gold Rush inflation and shortages. To make matters even tougher, much of the terrain was mountainous, arid, and occupied by hostile Indians. In this extraordinarily delicate and difficult operation, politics and rivalry turned out to be the biggest obstacles.

The treaty had been signed only ten days after the gold discovery on the American River in the Sacramento Valley on January 24, 1848. President James Polk's appointment to lead the commission was A. J. Sevier, who died prior to Senate confirmation. Ohio politician John B. Weller stepped in as Polk's second choice, a political reward to the former Democratic congressman who had been defeated in a Senate race. Because it was a midnight appointment for the Polk administration, determining the international boundary line was defined by Washington politics that reverberated across Southwestern deserts and all the way to California shores.

Perhaps Weller's knowledge that he was unpopular with the Whig administration under the newly elected Zachary Taylor—as well as his ambition—operated as encouragement for him to surround himself as much as possible with homeboys, people he knew he could trust, such as his brother and some Ohio friends. He added Ohioans to his entourage in New Orleans, when he was about to take ship for Panama on his way to California. Robert Patterson Effinger was one of these fellows from Ohio, and he became a civilian employee of the Boundary Commission that began its work at the western terminus of the international boundary, at a place called Camp Riley, at the foot of San Diego bay. Effinger's principal job, which he described with considerable pride in his letters, was as an assistant to the astronomer, in itself only a minor assignment contributing to the commission's larger object. Among the values of his letters are the well-informed observations he made of events surrounding him; his fine and entertaining descriptions of exotic Panama; and his depiction of the shockingly poor logistical support, financial, and personnel arrangements made for the commission. Establishing the boundary specified in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was of no less import than fixing the continental limits of the United States. Work of the Boundary Commission begun under Weller, and continued by John Russell Bartlett and William H. Emory, brought into the nation not only California, but also Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, and part of Texas. Realization of Thomas Jefferson's continental dream was at hand.[1]

Robert Patterson Effinger (1826–1899) grew up in a close family setting in Lancaster, a prosperous town and seat of Fairfield County, some thirty miles south of Columbus, at the center of the Hocking Valley in the Ohio hill country.[2] The Hocking Canal, connecting the town directly to the Ohio River, was completed in 1839, elaborating the existing canal system in this well-watered, pretty basin. Some dramatic sandstone ledges among the hills



Effinger wrote longingly of the "comforts and luxuries" of his home (center) in Lancaster, Ohio, shown here shortly before it was demolished in 1929. And well he might be proud of his family home: The Federal style house had such distinguished architectural details that its doorway and arching Palladian windows were saved and incorporated into the Fairfield County District Library. Photograph courtesy of the Fairfield County District Library.

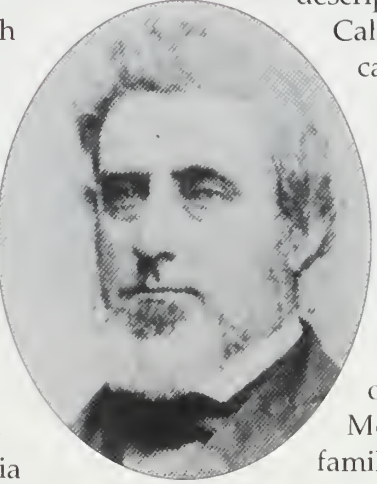
around Lancaster gave the valley "a highly romantic appearance," evergreen and other trees covered hills dotted with natural springs and secluded spots of wild natural charm.[3] Ebenezer Zane, pioneer road builder and developer of Ohio, had founded and named the town in 1800, honoring pioneers who came from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. It was located near the center point of Zane's Trace, the route connecting the Ohio River's huge bend from Wheeling at the state's eastern border to Maysville in the southwest on the Kentucky line. A central location in the state, close to the National Road, and connected to other transportation networks made Lancaster a logical commercial, professional, and business center. Canal transportation expanded markets and brought the world to the town, ushering in prosperity and Lancaster's "heroic age,"[4] which coincided with Effinger's formative years.

Today, Lancaster is a city of 35,000, with a flourishing downtown historic district, proud of historical connections with famous and accomplished Americans who were Effinger's contemporaries and familiars. Most famous among them is William Tecumseh Sherman, his brother John Sherman (U.S. Senator, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of State); Thomas Ewing (U.S. Senator, Secretary of the Treasury, and first Secretary of the Interior); and Henry Stanberry (attorney general of Ohio and U.S. Attorney General and defender of Andrew Johnson during his impeachment). Lancaster now is home to Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio University Lancaster and, perhaps most famously, Anchor Hocking Glass since 1905, now part of the giant Newell Rubbermaid Incorporated.

In 1850, Lancaster reached just under 3,500 people, and it was already a promising town in its early years when Effinger's tin- and coppersmith father had arrived there from Virginia some thirty years before. By the time Effinger and his siblings were growing up in the 1830s, the town was flowering, a bloom that lasted into the Civil War years.[5] It never again achieved the greatness of this period, which had been due to the maturity of transportation systems—canals and then the railroads that replaced them in the 1850s—and the actuarial coincidence of those overachieving native sons. These features, plus additional prosperity and centrality as a trade center also produced other achievements, such as architecture distinguished beyond the expectations of a country town. Along with several other Lancaster houses, the Effinger home is on the Historic American Building Survey (OH-41). The boom that accounted for construction of fine homes and canals that connected Lancaster by water not only to Ohio cities of Toledo, Cincinnati, and Cleveland, but beyond to New Orleans, New York, and the whole world, had lasting effects. It was via the inland waterways that Effinger and other "Lancaster Boys" traveled to New Orleans, and onward by sea to California.

During the glory years of Effinger's youth, the Fairfield County bar was particularly distinguished, and in Lancaster, lawyers and merchants were the stalwarts of the civic elite. Charles Sherman and his son, John, as well as Stanberry and Ewing, and a number of other lawyers, including John D. Martin, who was Effinger's mentor and partner before he went to California, were the cream of the Fairfield County legal crop. Besides distinguishing themselves in business and the law, these men laid down civic and cultural foundations, such as the Lancaster Institute, a literary society, of which Samuel Effinger was a founder in 1830. Despite enlightened cultural views exhibited by some, most Lancaster residents showed prejudice against African Americans. An exception, however, was the Effinger family, beginning with father Samuel, who had employed an African American named Scipio Africanus Smith for many years, and carried on particularly by Dr. Michael Effinger, who was a conductor on the Underground Railroad.[6] R. P. Effinger repeatedly exhibited the family attitudes of tolerance and sympathy for African Americans in the letters he wrote during his California adventure.

Called "Pat" by the family and others who knew him,[7] R. P. Effinger returned to Lancaster from California late in 1850, but did not stay long, perhaps encouraged by travel experience to make his own way, apart from old friends and family. He moved to Peru, in north central Indiana in 1852, and practiced law in partnership with N. O. Ross. At age twenty-nine, in 1855 in Medina, Ohio, he married Frances Ann Barbour (1836–1914), and they had seven children. Effinger's career was full: He did legal work for the railroads—Peru was something of a railroad hub—and he was active in the Democratic Party, serving as an elector in 1860 and a district delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1868.[8] By 1882, Effinger was still practicing law in Peru, and had been joined in practice by his eldest son, Michael S. (born 1857).[9] Taking a hands-on role in town affairs, R. P. Effinger was active in the Presbyterian church, and he served as a school trustee, as city attorney in Peru, and as a judge for Miami County. He died among family and friends in Peru on December 13, 1899.



A portrait of R. P. Effinger has yet to be located, but perhaps he resembled his older "Brother Mike" (1819–1890). Michael Effinger was a physician in Lancaster, and the head of the family by the time the twenty-three year old "Pat" headed for his adventures in California. Photograph undated; courtesy of the Fairfield County District Library.

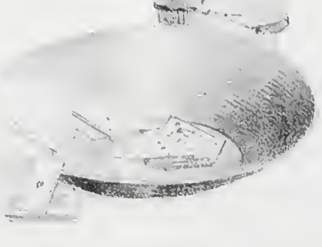
R. P. Effinger's letters are extraordinary. The known details of his life following his return from California reveal only a dedicated, hard working, kind, and well-liked person, which ought to be sufficient achievement for anyone. But Effinger's letters of 1849 and 1850 invite an examination and allow a contextualization that reveal a broader scope and a more profound story than many a Gold Rush-era document. In the selections below from the two hundred-page, tiny but mostly neatly penned holograph manuscript pages that make up the Effinger Papers, the author provides eyewitness descriptions of his travel to and activities in California. The full collection, which is called Manuscript 643 in the North Baker Library at California Historical Society headquarters in San Francisco, consists of thirty-two autograph letters plus a number of newspaper clippings, and several documents concerning Effinger's business dealings in California. Effinger's full text contains speculation, hearsay, and second-hand reporting presented here. Most inquiries concerning particulars of family relations and friends in Ohio have also been left out, so that the concentration is focused on the people, the events, and the environment that Effinger witnessed first-hand, as no one else did.

What follows is an altogether distinct and unique document. A good deal of its special nature is derived from the unusual circumstances that placed Effinger in a position to meet nationally prominent individuals and that encouraged him to make assessments about California's nature and benefits for the future quite apart from gold. In some ways, Effinger could not have been more wrong, and he seems incapable of vision. For example, he thought California was unsuited to agriculture because there was so little rain and that irrigation was impossible. No, R. P. Effinger was not imaginative, but he was frank and analytical. He made earnest attempts to provide descriptions of the country and of San Francisco that he thought his family would enjoy, and he begged their forgiveness for inadvertent repetitions, for occasional haste at the time of writing, and for excessive detail. Polite and considerate of his readers, Effinger was also proud of his cost-cutting and money-making achievements and completely candid in revealing these details to his readers. He was focused on his goal—which was to make money—and secondarily to see the elephant, that is, to see what all the fuss was about in California. Never did the thought enter his mind of remaining permanently in California; always he looked forward to being back at home, as did most forty-niners. Like others at the time—if not most—he thought California was a humbug; it was a load of hype, overrated by far, and in the case of San Francisco, not even a nice place to visit. Effinger never did dream the California dream: He did not recognize his sojourn in California as an adventure, he did not seek to reinvent himself in California, and he did not think the future of the nation lay in the state. Of course he was wrong.

But he was no fool. Perhaps he recognized that he was not the type for California, or better said, that California was not the right place for him. He was resolute in his aims, firm in his own opinions, and solicitous of less fortunate people. He had been born and reared in a close-family circle, dedicated to town life, and surrounded by and fully committed to community values. Perhaps the nation's heartland from which he hailed was his proper and rightful home.

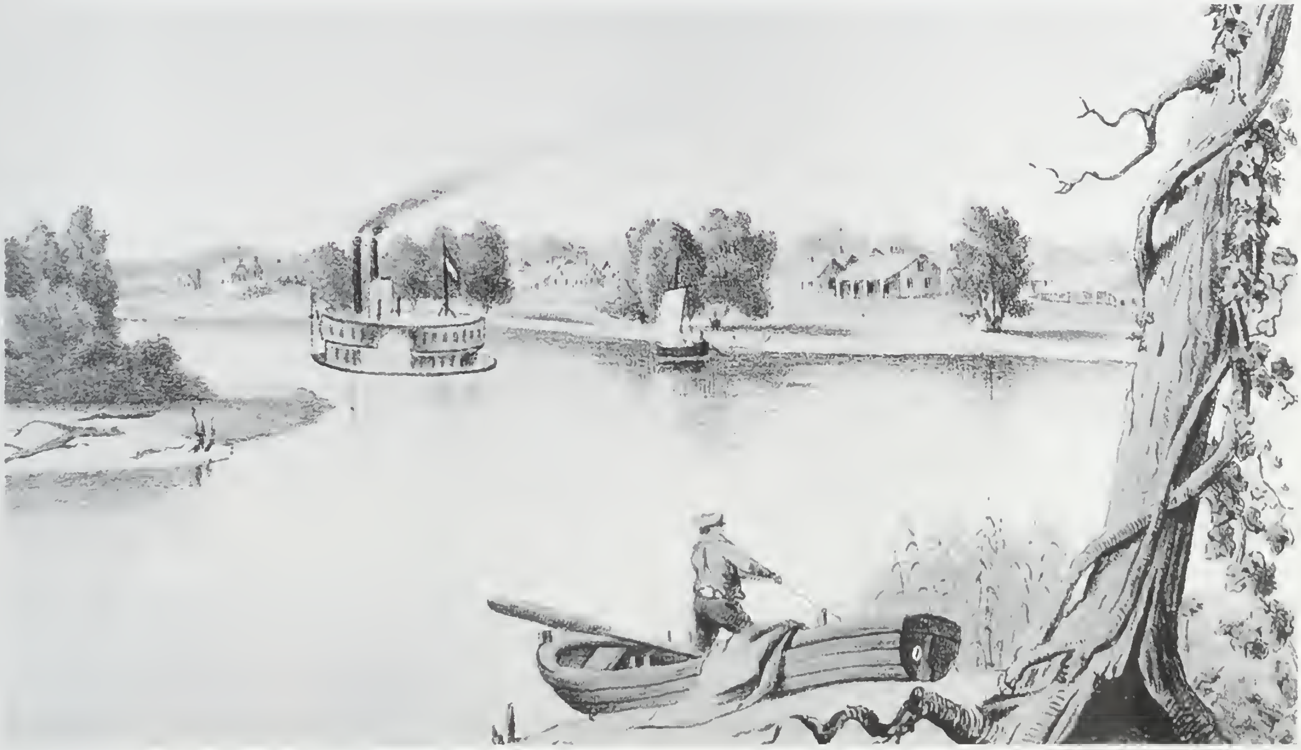
Even so, California benefited from this outlander's visit. Effinger's enthusiastic descriptions of Panama, his accounts of California celebrities of the day, his opinions about the Pacific coast's prospects for the future—right or wrong—all committed to paper in little-known family letters, constitute a virtually unknown but veritable gold mine.

—Janet R. Fireman
Editor



The Adventure Begins

Down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers



On the first stage of his journey, Effinger stopped in at Cypress Grove, President Zachary Taylor's plantation on the banks of the Mississippi. He reported that he was "quite disappointed in not seeing [the president's war horse] Old Whitey—the general having taken him with him to Washington." Taylor had been elected just a few months before Effinger's March 1849 visit. Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection.

February 28th 1849
Planter's Hotel, New Orleans

Dear Brother, *

I have purposely delayed writing until I had finally completed all my arrangements for leaving this city. This having been done I shall give a brief account of myself since our **departure from Cincinnati**.

We left Cincinnati on the 13th last in the *South America*. Although the weather was exceedingly cold we had quite a pleasant trip down the Ohio River. We found the Mississippi very high, higher than it has been known to be for years and filled with large quantities of floating ice. On the evening of the 17th, when about forty miles below Memphis, we were overtaken by a violent storm. The waves rolled over the bow to the cabin deck and then broke over the **hurricane**. This kind of a storm on the Mississippi may rather astonish you but you must recollect that the whole country for miles around was overflowed with water. The officers of the boat as well as the passengers became very much alarmed. The difficulty was, we had to weather the storm until we could find some place to land and in order to accomplish this, the machinery of the boat had to be kept in motion and the great danger to be apprehended was the bursting of a pipe, in which event not a man would have lived to tell the tale. Notwithstanding our perilous situation, I was considerably diverted

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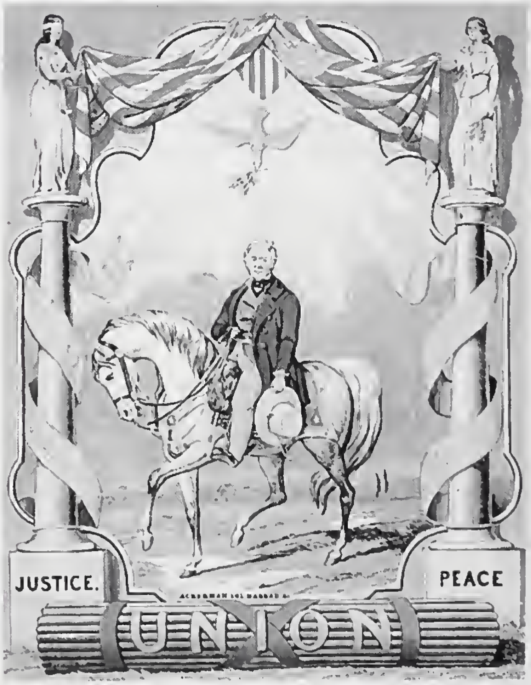
**See the end of each letter for explanatory annotations. Annotated words and phrases appear in bold.*

by some of the members of our party. All felt alarmed—some were frightened out of their wits—while others were seasick. After a few shrieks had proceeded from the ladies' cabin, poor Tom Wilson was seen to emerge from his stateroom stripped to his nightclothes, ready for a swim. Philip Kramer was seen engaged trying to blow up his life preserver, but so badly frightened that he hadn't wind enough to fill it, a rare occurrence with old Dad as he generally has a surcharge of wind. We at last found a landing and lay over till morning.

"A characteristic of New Orleans is the wickedness of its inhabitants."

With this single exception our passage down the Mississippi was a very pleasant and delightful one. No one can at first view be pleased with the country bordering on the Mississippi. The land is absolutely lower than the river. The first thing necessary to be done in opening a plantation is to throw up an embankment to prevent the water overflowing their lands. Baton Rouge is by far the prettiest place on the Mississippi. I visited **General Taylor's** residence and was quite disappointed in not seeing **Old Whitey**—the general having taken him with him to Washington. Memphis, Natchez, and Vicksburg are all very pretty places and in their external appearance present none of that daredevil character for which they are celebrated.

We arrived at New Orleans on the evening of the 20th last and took quarters at the Planter's Hotel. I have heard a great deal said of New Orleans, but with all the fine descriptions of this city, I was not prepared to see what I have seen. The business which had been suspended in consequence of the cholera was revived about the time of our arrival here. Such a sight as their levee presented rivals description: acres of cotton bales and freight of all variety, drays without number, oceans of steamships, vessels, schooners, steamboats, sailing crafts of all denominations. I have it from the most reliable authority that New Orleans never presented such an appearance as it does now. The city was never crowded with more strangers, never hurried with more business, never delighted with more amusement than now.



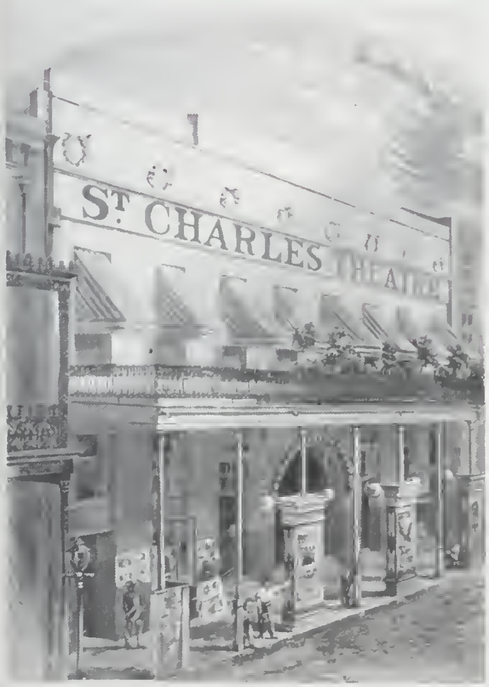
General Zachary Taylor and Old Whitey were enormously popular as heroes of the Mexican-American War. Although Taylor had been born into a family of planters and slave owners, he was adored for the common touch he had as a general. He earned the nickname "Old Rough and Ready" because of early career success as an Indian fighter and because he gladly shared battlefield discomforts with the troops. Taylor died in office July 9, 1850, perhaps of cholera. "Union." Woodcut, 1848. Thomas W. Strong, engraver. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

The first thing, however, that strikes a northern man coming into this country is the change of climate. To leave a freezing, cold, and chilly country and to be thrown in the course of a few days into the warm, balmy, and genial climate of the South gives one an idea of this terrestrial globe which he can never theoretically obtain by the study of **Walter Bruns Geography**. In this season of the year this state is certainly the most delightful country in the world. It would have amused you to have seen the boys leaving the boat and coming into the city with their thick winter clothing, sweat oozing out at every pore. I dress now in the lightest clothing and in the middle of the day suffer from the heat. I met **Henry T. Myers** here at the Saint Charles Hotel and didn't he show me the sights of the city. He boards at the Saint Charles and has his office on the corner of Saint Charles and Common streets, dresses in the most elegant manner, and is without doubt making money. His business consists entirely in selling patents. He owns the finest mares and Negro servants that can be found in the city, looks very well, and is decidedly in good spirits. Today he presented me a Bowie knife that cost twenty-five dollars. He spends his money most lavishly.

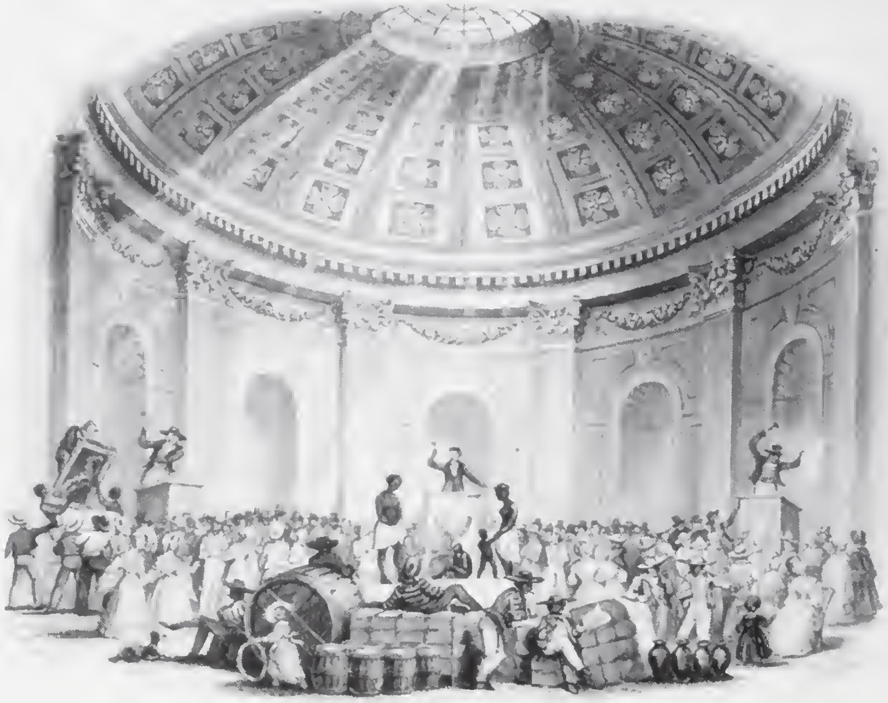
On the 22nd of this month they celebrated Washington's birthday in this city and laid the cornerstone of the **Customs House**, which gave me an opportunity of seeing all the military companies and civil associations. Yesterday the Odd Fellows had a celebration and made a grand display. Among other curiosities that I have seen in the city I shall mention **Maccready**, who is playing at the **Saint Charles Theatre**, **Booth** at the American Theatre, Monsieur and Madame **Monplaisir** at the French Theatre. I have seen **Henry Clay**, been at the cock pit (saw five hundred dollars bet on a single fight), attended the horse races last Sunday (Mother must not know this) on the Metairie course, visited the old Spanish Cathedral, attended the French Market, drove down the Shell Road to Lake Pontchartrain in company with Myers, and saw the fastest pacing horses in Louisiana: Fashion, President, and Grey Eagle.

But of all the sights that I have seen, a "Nigger sale"wins the money. These sales take place in the different exchanges of the city, one side of which is devoted to the retailing of liquor and the rest to stands where the Negroes are exposed for sale. I saw a few days since a large family sold in three separate parcels, and when they parted with one another, it was heart-rending to see the feeling they displayed. The people here, however, regard it with the same indifference that we would the separation of a cow and her calf. The aristocracy among the slaves is always measured out by the prices they bring. You will often hear one say to the other "Mo' way from here—You be only a four hundred-dollar nigger." In the French Negro market you will occasionally see some beautiful quadroons for sale. To see a pretty Mulatto girl of about sixteen or seventeen standing on a platform and half-Dago Frenchmen give her strict examinations and bidding for her as they would for a horse, is neither very modest nor agreeable to one's feelings. And these poor people who are thus daily exposed for sale show in their expressions that they are as deeply sensible of their degradation and humiliating position, as any person gifted with the least particle of intelligence would be under similar circumstances.

The French part of New Orleans is the city of Paris on a small scale. There are some things the French excel in and that is the tasteful manner in which they arrange their stores. The most magnificent exhibitions that I have ever witnessed are on Chartres Street. On Broadway in New York and Chestnut Street in Philadelphia you see many pretty things, but none of them will compare to Chartres. I have stood for hours in and about the French Market listening to the Niggers talking French; very few of them speak a word in English. The girls in this city are the prettiest beings on God's earth. You seldom ever meet a woman, especially in the French part of the city, unless she is handsome. And then they dress so elegantly. I thought rich dressing never became anybody until I arrived in this city, but the climate is so warm and fine and everything looks



As a port of embarkation for the gold fields, New Orleans boomed and bustled, Effinger reported. "The city was never crowded with more strangers, never hurried with more business, never delighted with more amusement than now." Among the amusements that Effinger took in were top-flight theatrical performers capitalizing on the influx of travelers and the city's warm spring weather. The deluxe Saint Charles Theatre seated 1,600. Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection.



As a northerner, Effinger found the sight of New Orleans's slave auctions repugnant. "I saw a few days since a large family sold in three separate parcels, and when they parted with one another, it was heart-rending to see the feeling they displayed." Effinger repeatedly exhibited the family attitudes of tolerance and sympathy for African Americans in the letters he wrote during his California adventure. Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection.

so neat and clean that it really seems comfortable to see three or four richly attired females squash themselves down in their magnificent carriages.

In New Orleans everything is carried on in a grand scale. Everybody seems to have plenty of money, and the great competition appears to be who can spend it the most extravagantly. The dirty newspaper boys on the street, the dray men, even the commonest laboring man can always raise his five dollars to bet on a horse race, cock fight, or any other sport that happens to be on the carpet. The wealthy planters who frequent the city during the winter months spend a great deal of money. One half of the buildings in New Orleans are used for bar rooms, restaurants, and coffee houses. And these include the largest rooms and finest buildings in the city. Any hour of the day or night that you go into any of these saloons you will find them filled with persons varying from fourteen to eighty years of age. It does occur to me that there is more liquor drunk in this than in any city of the entire world. Another characteristic of New Orleans is the wickedness of its inhabitants. I never heard people swear until I came here.

Truly & affectionately
Your Brother
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

Dear Brother: In this letter, Robert Patterson Effinger (1826–1899), known to his family as "Pat," writes his brother John (c. 1823–after 1906). John received a number of Effinger's letters, as did Michael (1819–1890), the eldest brother, a physician in Lancaster, and the head of the family by the time his twenty-three year old brother, and their younger brother, Edward T., set off for California at about the same time, but separately. John remained in Lancaster and while Pat and Eddy were gone, married Margaret E. Catlin, known as Maggie, who taught elementary school in Lancaster until 1891. Also at home was a sister, Mary Anna, who later married J. C. Kinkead. Two more siblings, Samuel and Catherine, apparently were dead by 1849.

Their father, Samuel Effinger (1792–1832) had arrived in Lancaster from Shenandoah County, Virginia in 1812, establishing a very successful copper and tin shop, a foundry, hardware store, and a tavern. He married Mary Ann Noble (d. 1859) and with prosperity, built a fine federal style house noted for its excellent and rare doorway and Palladian windows, and many elegant interior architectural features, which was completed in 1823. Some of these were saved when the house was razed in 1929, and along with furnishings and other possessions, they have been preserved in local homes and in the Fairfield County District Library.[10] The Effinger House was located a half-block from the central square, where Shaw's Inn now stands in the Lancaster Historic District, which includes the Sherman and Ewing homes, among many other structures contemporary to the Effinger homestead. The bar at Shaw's Inn retains the name, Pilcher's Tavern, which existed when Samuel Effinger bought the property.[11]

Robert addressed most of his letters to his brothers John and Michael, several to his mother, and one to his sister, expressing within that he expected each recipient to share the whole contents of his letters with all the family members, and perhaps even with the family dogs, Jack and Buster, to whom he sent regards, and also to Charlie, the horse.

Departure from Cincinnati: More detail about the trip down the Mississippi from Cincinnati is provided by Samuel McNeil, an eloquent shoemaker from Lancaster, Ohio. McNeil traveled by coach to Cincinnati with other Lancaster adventurers and boarded the *South America* as Effinger did. McNeil was among the travelers from Lancaster who split from Effinger at New Orleans, taking passage on the *Maria Burt*, which was forced to return to New Orleans after springing serious leaks at Balize, in the mouth of the Mississippi. McNeil and his companions boarded the *Globe* to Brazos at the mouth of the Rio Grande, near present Brownsville, and made their way overland from the Texas coast to Mazatlán, and then on to San Francisco.

McNeil's punchy account of his travels was published following his return to Ohio as *McNeils Travels In 1849, To, Through And From The Gold Regions, In California. By Samuel McNeil, A Shoemaker.*[12] Some of the men McNeil traveled with from Lancaster to Cincinnati in early February 1849 were with Effinger from New Orleans to Panama and were among the people he mentions in the course of his letters, as he does McNeil upon his departure from California. McNeil identified his company as "Boyle Ewing, a son of the Hon. Thomas Ewing, Secretary of the interior; James Myers, a capable and honest constable; Rankin, State Attorney; Jesse B. Hart, a shrewd lawyer; Benjamin Fennifrock, a farmer; Samuel Stambaugh, a merchant; Joseph Stambaugh, a druggist; Edward Strode, a potter, from Perry county; John McLaughlin, from the same county; Denman, nephew of the Hon. Thomas Ewing; William F. Legg, from Columbus, and Leverett, from the same."

Hurricane: An upper deck, above the superstructures, used as a promenade on passenger vessels.

Zachary Taylor: Elected president on November 7, 1848, the first time the entire nation voted on the same day, Taylor was enormously popular as a hero of the Mexican-American War. Born into a family of planters and slave owners, Taylor had pursued a military career from an early age, settling in Louisiana. Taylor was a wealthy man and held properties in Kentucky and Mississippi, but he was adored for the common touch he had as a general. He earned the nickname, "Old Rough and Ready" because of early career success as an Indian fighter and because he gladly shared battlefield discomforts with the troops. Taylor's army horse, **Old Whitey**, was also a favorite with the public. Visitors to the White House saw him grazing on the lawn; some took home a hair from his mane as a souvenir. Taylor died in office July 9, 1850, perhaps of cholera.

Walter Bruns Geography: That Effinger was confused about the name of the great geographer, Conrad Malte-Brun (1775–1826), is no surprise. Malte-Brun was born in Denmark as Malthe Konrad Bruun, educated there, banished for his pamphleteering and political views, and eventually changed his name. After a stay in Sweden, he ended up in Paris, where he distinguished himself as a geographer, and became known for his very readable narrative style that served as a model for the French school of geography. No doubt Effinger referred to Malte-Brun's six-volume encyclopedia of world geography (1810–1829), which was published in many English editions from the 1820s to the 1840s (and beyond) in Edinburgh, London, Philadelphia, and Boston as *A System of Universal Geography, or A Description of All the Parts of the World, on a New Plan, According to the Great Natural Divisions of the Globe*. A passage from Malte-Brun's *Universal Geography*, entitled "Mexico. Some account of its inhabitants, productions, and natural curiosities" was published in the first (and subsequent) editions of The *Personal Narrative of James O. [Ohio] Pattie* in Cincinnati in 1833. Pattie (1804?–1850?) traveled from his Kentucky home to New Mexico, Arizona, and California as a mountain man, or trapper in the 1820s, making a detour to Mexico City on his return to the United States. During narration of his adventures to newspaperman Timothy Flint, it is likely that both Pattie and Flint embellished and exaggerated the facts, creating a classic account that has been called the first western potboiler, as well as many other things. Pattie's *Personal Narrative* was published several times in the 1830s and 1840s, and Effinger might have read it prior to traveling to California.[13]

Henry T. Myers, a businessman on the make in New Orleans when Effinger was there, had lived in Fairfield County, Ohio.[14] At a meeting in Portsmouth Square in San Francisco on December 16, 1849, Colonel H. T. Myers was elected treasurer of the Relief Association, established to provide assistance to the poor in the city, and the next day he absconded with one thousand dollars or more, apparently to Hawaii.

Myers had set himself up in San Francisco as proprietor of the Ward House and something of a high roller, as Effinger described in letters in November 1849 and January 29, 1850 (see below, p. 61). Probably because Myers had been a regular sort of guy from Ohio, his trajectory through brief but showy success, financial ruin, and conversion to scoundrel status made Myers a fascinating topic for description in Effinger's letters to his family along with newspaper clippings describing the disgrace. A reward of one thousand dollars was offered by officers of the Relief Association (which included at least one of the "Lancaster Boys") and a "Description of the said Colonel H. T. Myers" was posted January 18, 1850:

> Height about 5 feet 9 inches, spare, slender, with drooping shoulders, pale faced, high cheek bones, prominent aquiline nose, forehead rather retreating, wore green glasses, apparently weak eyes, dark brown or black hair, speaks fluently, usually in a quiet tone, with remarkable self possession; neat in his person and very friendly in his manner, makes acquaintances freely and is apparently about 36 years of age.[15]

Senator Henry Clay (1777–1852) of Kentucky was on hand in New Orleans for laying of the cornerstone of the **Customs House** on February 22, 1849. The engineer in charge, P.G.T. Beauregard, became a famous Confederate general. During the Union occupation of New Orleans, the Customs House served as a headquarters and as a prison for Confederate officers.[16]

William Charles Macready (1793–1873), great English actor and manager of Covent Garden and Drury Lane theaters in London, made lasting contributions to theatrical practice by insisting on the principle of unity, by which all aspects of a performance were organized according to the playwright's intentions, rather than by individual actors' whims. During his third and final visit to the United States, in 1849, he performed in New Orleans.[17]

The **Saint Charles Theatre**, located on Saint Charles Street between Poydras and Gravier streets, rebuilt in 1843 after a disastrous fire the year before, seated 1,600 people. Audiences enjoyed stock company performances as well as visiting dramatic, musical, and dance attractions.[18]

Junius Brutus Booth (1796–1852), one of the greatest actors of his day and father to three actors (Junius Brutus, Jr.; Edwin; and John Wilkes), first performed in his native England, moved to the United States in 1821 and made annual tours from Boston to New Orleans between 1835 and 1852.[19]

Monplaisir: French ballet dancer-manager of the Monplaisir Ballet Troupe, Ippolito Monplaisir and his partner and wife, performed in Europe, Mexico, and the United States, including runs at both the American and the Varieties (or Gaiety) theaters in New Orleans, as well as a visit to San Francisco in March 1854.[20]

Steaming Off for Panama

Just appointed U.S. Boundary Commissioner, Colonel John B. Weller arrived in New Orleans en route to California while Effinger and his fellow Ohio travelers were enjoying the city. A number of the men Effinger refers to later as the "Lancaster Boys" took the steamship Maria Burt *to Chagres, the Atlantic port on the Isthmus of Panama. Luckier men, including Effinger, managed to align themselves with Weller's retinue, scheduled to sail on "the splendid government steamship* Alabama . . . *at the expense of Uncle Sam." Effinger's frugality stimulated him to crow at having arranged his transportation to that point and on to Panama without spending a cent, and his spirits were raised further by the prospect of comfort and speed accorded to Weller's party, detailed to run the boundary line between the United States and Mexico as called for in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.*

March 9th 1849
On Board Steamship ***Alabama***

Dear Brother,
On Friday, the 2nd inst., we left New Orleans for Chagres in the U.S. Steamship *Alabama*, in company with **Colonel John B. Weller** and his suite. Ferguson, Rice, Miller, Miens, Kramer, Rankin, Chaney, Wilson and myself were the only persons who could obtain the consent of Colonel Weller to accompany his expedition. The rest of our party left New Orleans on the 1st inst. (one day before us) in the steamship *Maria Burt*. (I had no difficulty nor had Ferguson in securing a passage with Colonel Weller, but we were met with very serious obstacles in trying to obtain passages for the rest of the boys.) When we arrived at Balize we ascertained that the *Maria Burt* had run foul of a snag and was compelled to return to New Orleans to be repaired. How long she will be detained God only knows. I regarded her from the first as an unseaworthy vessel, and before I would have taken my passage in her I would have remained in New Orleans till the end of time. This accident is as unfortunate for us as it is for the rest of our party who are on board of her. Not wishing to tax Colonel Weller with all our freight, we placed under the charge of our party, who took passage in the *Maria Burt*, all our provisions, amounting to forty kegs of nicely packed bulk pork; twenty and one-half barrels of sea biscuit, pepper, salt, sugar, tea, coffee, beans; in fine, all our provisions and all our tents, camping utensils, working implements, etc; only charging ourselves with our own personal baggage. From the fact that the *Maria Burt* left New Orleans before us, we had every reason to believe that she would reach Chagres in advance of us and therefore deposited our goods etc. on board of her. It may be possible that she will not be detained more than a day or two in making her repairs, in which event the balance of our party and our provisions will reach Panama a few days after we arrive there.

We entered the Gulf of Mexico on Saturday, the 3rd inst. The weather was beautiful—a clear sky and strong pure sea breeze. The Gulf at all times and in all seasons presents rather a singular appearance. The sea is so rough, that the water seems to be swelling and bubbling as if it were boiling. The consequence

In New Orleans, Effinger threw in his lot with fellow Ohioan John Brown Weller (1812–1875), who was on his way to California to direct the U.S. Boundary Commission. Appointed at the end of President James K. Polk's term, he was soon replaced by John Russell Bartlett. Weller went on to serve in the U.S. Senate as a Democrat from California from 1852 to 1857 and was governor of California from 1858 to 1860. Courtesy of the California State Capitol Museum.

is that the ship is tossed first one way and then another: now it goes up and down, now it rocks, and never for one instant remains quiet. This everlasting and eternal commotion is only disturbed by a northwester and when that once strikes you, there is the d——l to pay. They come so sudden and so unexpected that chairs, tables, books, hats and all loose articles are swept from the upper deck in an instant. Even now while I write, the ship keeps up such a pitching and heaving and tossing that I can scarcely keep my hand to the paper, and yet this is considered a very *calm* day.

"The ship keeps up pitching and heaving and tossing. . . ."

No sooner had we struck the Gulf, than some of the passengers began to give premonitory symptoms of seasickness, and among the first victims was poor Philip Kramer. At first it amused me very much to see the poor fellows stagger to the guards and heave up, or as they call it here at sea, "**cascade**." But after awhile my diversion and amusement were turned into pity for really I never saw more suffering and excruciating pain and agony than was exhibited on board our ship a few days after we got to sea. With the exception of myself and Bill Rice, every landlubber on board became seasick, including Colonel Weller, **Dr. Chamberlin**, **H. H. Robinson**, and **Oliver Witherby** (who are the principal men in Colonel Weller's corps), and all the boys in our party with the exceptions I have named above. Had this seasickness only lasted for a few hours or even for a few days, I would not have minded it so much, but, we have now been at sea seven days and it still continues. I saw one poor fellow gagging over the guard until he broke a blood vessel and a stream of blood gushed from his mouth. Among our boys Jim Miller suffers the most. For seven days and nights has he lain on deck so sick that he could scarcely raise his head. It was really a pitiable sight to see Jim Miens a short time after he had been attacked. You know Jim has so much meekness and resignation, and there he would sit all day with his head leaning against a post without uttering a groan or complaint, looking so pale and sad.

I could not feel much sympathy with Philip for I have so often seen him seasick on land after his evening potations that it was no new sight to see. I could not help with all the suffering I saw around me from being amused with **Tom Wilson**. At one time you would see him spread himself flat on his belly until he would cover up about one half of the deck and the way he would squirm and sigh and groan and vomit was enough to bring the sharks around the ship, who every moment expected that they would have his carcass thrown overboard to appease their ravenous appetites. Tom is a kind-hearted, first-rate fellow and it was altogether owing to my urgent solicitation with Colonel Weller that he accompanies us.

It was a matter of some considerable surprise and self-congratulations with me that I was not taken with seasickness, and while I am upon this subject I will throw out some suggestions that may be of practical use to you if you ever travel at sea. As soon as you feel any nausea or sickening sensation at the stomach, draw your vest and pantaloons as tight around the waist as you can endure it. Tie immediately above your stomach a broad belt or your handkerchief made in large folds and draw it very tight. Remain in this position until you become accustomed to the motion of the sea and then you can gradually relax the tightness. Should you still feel nauseated, eat a small bit of sea cracker and lay on the flat of your back, some place on deck, where you can catch the sea breeze. If these remedies don't release you, then your only hope is cascade away until you get well.

We passed the island of Cuba, on the 11th inst. and did not stop at Havana as I expected we would. Colonel Weller was exceedingly anxious to stop at Havana, but he could not do so without disobeying his instructions and we were therefore compelled to pass the most interesting point in our whole visit. Yesterday we passed the island of Great Cayman situated in the Caribbean Sea, a beautiful spot, about twelve miles long by ten miles wide, inhabited by a mongrel set of French and Spanish, who are reputed to be the descendants of pirates. Twenty years ago this island was a favorite resort for the pirates who infested the Gulf of Mexico. How exceedingly provoking it is to pass all these points that are full of interest to the curious, without being able to stop at any of them. The Caribbean Sea presents the same appearance and characteristics of the Gulf of Mexico—if anything it is stormier.

A trip at sea is certainly the most dull, tiresome, and wearisome thing that a man can encounter in this life. Nearly everybody gets sick, and those who remain well naturally become dull and stupid. You see nothing but one everlasting sheet of water—occasionally a school of flying fish will rise from the water and skim over its surface. Then a huge porpoise will lazily raise its head from the sea, turn a few awkward somersaults and disappear, while a few hungry sharks follow in the wake of the ship ready to exercise their powers of deglutition on anything that falls overboard. At long intervals and at a great distance, a sail will hove in sight, but quickly fade away; then follows the same dull monotony, which renders every hour so wearisome. Nearly every day since we left the Balize, we have had to encounter strong head winds. We have not been able to raise our sails once on account of these contrary winds, and this it is that has delayed us so long on our journey. We will probably arrive at Chagres on Monday or Tuesday next, the 12th or 14th inst. If the *Alabama* remains at Chagres long enough, I will write to you from Panama, so that you will receive a full account of crossing the Isthmus at the same time you receive this. In any event I shall write to you from Panama.

March 10th
Caribbean Sea, Latitude 18

The weather is becoming most excessively hot. The sun literally scorches one through and through. My face and hands have become as much tanned as if I had worked in the harvest field the whole season. You can form no idea from any description that I can give you of the intense heat in this country. Were it not for the fine sea breezes, I don't know what we would do. Tonight there was a full eclipse of the moon. The sight was rendered much more magnificent from the fact that it was unexpected. I shall not grow fanciful and attempt to give you a description of this splendid sight, as you will no doubt be surfeited with descriptions in many of your public prints as we have a goodly number of scribblers on board. Nor shall I attempt to give you an account of the beautiful sunsets we have at sea. **Bulwer** has often attempted this—but notwithstanding his great fluency of language and talent for description he conveys but an inadequate idea of the beauty and grandeur of a sunset at sea. I will just here make this single remark about the weather—that I have not seen one drop of rain since I left home. Every day is full of sunshine, and the skies have been without a cloud.

Let me give you a short account of the principal men on board of our vessel. Colonel Weller is a cold, proud, haughty, and exceedingly vain man. He likes to get a crowd of persons around him and relate his numerous adventures in Mexico, or tell what he did when he was a member of Congress. To hear him talk you would naturally suppose, provided you gave him credit for one-half he says, that he was the principal man who planned all of General Taylor's battles—that he was the gallant fellow who did all the fighting and that to him and him alone belong the glory and success of our armies in the recent contest with Mexico. I cannot respect the assumed dignity of this man while I am incessantly disgusted with his egotism and vanity.

But I gladly leave such a character for the good qualities to be found in the surgeon who attends Colonel Weller's Commission, Dr. Chamberlin, more popularly known in the army as "Old Medicine." I have really become very much attached to the doctor. He is so modest and unassuming—has so much kindness and goodness of heart—he possesses so much frankness and generosity—and withal there is a dry strain of witticism in his conversations that makes his company so agreeable and his manners interesting and at the same time amusing. I do like Dr. Chamberlin and I know that our poor boys who have suffered so much from sea sickness on this voyage will never forget his gratuitous attention and disinterested kindness.

H. H. Robinson, Esq. has shown himself to be what I had always esteemed him, a perfect gentleman. He has not only won my esteem but by his many favors has placed me under obligations, which I fear I can never repay.

Oliver Witherby is another member of Colonel Weller's party for whom I entertain great respect. Brother Mike will remember Mr. Witherby as he was at Oxford during his sojourn there. The rest of Colonel Weller's party is a very clever set of ordinary men. **Major Seawell**, a quartermaster in the regular army, is also on our vessel with his family consisting of his wife and three children, the eldest about seven and the youngest about six months of age. He is going to California to join the regular army. I should think if his wife and small children could endure a trip across the Isthmus, a stout young man should feel no apprehensions on the subject.

The whole number on board of our vessel amounts to about fifty, and she is well able to accommodate two hundred persons. We are not therefore much crowded for room. We live on the fat of the land. No one can tell how nice and snug it is to live at the expense of Old Uncle Sam till he has once tried it, and then he can't find it in his heart to blame the poor devils who are always trying to get in his employ. Why, I never sat down to finer dinners than we have every day on board of this vessel. Roast turkey, roast beef, corned beef, boiled ham, and tongue, fresh mutton, chicken pies, nice turnips, yams, potatoes, and cabbage and all kinds of vegetables; cranberry, peach, and apple pies; and then some of the best old Madeira and Claret wines to top off with. After dinner we go up on deck and under the broad awning smoke our richly flavored Havana cigars until the soft breezes of the ocean fan us to sleep and then undisturbed we enjoy our siesta while the poor seasick devils puke over the gangway. This is no overwrought picture that I am drawing. Oh Uncle Sam is a mighty good master, he gives you a good appetite and then feeds it while at the same time he lavishly and with a generous hand puts the **yellow boys** at your command and tells you to use them. Well, this don't look much like starving, does it! But you may say the "hard time is coming." Well, I will tell you how far it has reached me when I arrive at Panama.

March 11th 1849
Sunday evening, nine o'clock

We are now within about 120 miles of Chagres. We will arrive there tomorrow at about noon. The weather here below is oppressively hot. I am sitting in the cabin with my coat off and the sweat oozing out at every pore. Most of us now sleep on deck. We take our blankets and a pillow and spread them on the deck and there snooze away till morning. We don't absolutely know what it is to see a moonlight night in the North. The moon is now full and were it not for the mildness of its light you would think it noonday. By the way, I must not forget to tell you of the phosphorescent appearances we notice on the sea every evening before the moon rises. Whenever the vessel strikes the water and makes it foam, you can see a thousand bolts of fire thrown out in every direction. Occasionally a bright lurid flame springs up and illumines everything around it, and where the sea is lashed into foam by a storm and each wave is topped by a white cap, the whole ocean looks like a sea of fire. I look upon this phosphorescent appearance of the water as the most wonderful and curious thing in nature. But it is too hot down here, so I will draw my long and I fear somewhat tedious letter to a close. When I come to describe my passage across the Isthmus and my entrance into the gold regions, I shall have a theme that will not only excite your interest but also gratify your curiosity.

Yours Affectionately,
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

John Brown Weller (1812–1875) was born, educated, and began his legal and political career in Ohio. He plunged into the Mexican-American War, commanding the Second Ohio Regiment of Volunteers at the battle of Monterrey. He was President James K. Polk's third choice to head the U.S. Boundary Commission, and the lame duck status of his appointment—as well as the disruption caused by the Gold Rush—hampered Weller's effectiveness. Replaced by John C. Frémont (who refused the post, having bigger fish to fry) and by John Russell Bartlett in February 1850, the ambitious Weller missed not a beat of opportunity, establishing a law practice in San Francisco and running for office. Throughout his career, perhaps more successful in getting elected than in serving the public, Weller went to the U.S. Senate as a Democrat from California 1852 to 1857, and was governor from 1858 to 1860, where his pro-slavery attitudes and political favoritism were well known. His final public position was as minister to Mexico 1860 to 1861. His support for the Confederacy in following years doomed his chances for further public office. In 1867, he settled in New Orleans to practice law and died there of smallpox.[21]

Cascade: *The Oxford English Dictionary* says "cascade" is vulgar usage for "vomit" and Webster says it is colloquial. Vulgar or colloquial as the word may have been, the action itself—or reaction to the seas—was surely a prominent fact of the travelers' experience, as Effinger's graphic description and the illustration on the back cover indicate.

Dr. Chamberlin and **H. H. Robinson**: Precise job descriptions and duties for two of Effinger's good friends in California are uncertain. Dr. Chamberlin and H. H. Robinson, like Effinger, were civilian employees of the U.S. Boundary Commission, presumably hired by Colonel Weller in Ohio before departure for New Orleans. Evidence is scanty and difficult to uncover concerning the work accomplished and contributions made by these men to the Boundary Commission. One of the charges made against Weller when John Charles Frémont was named to replace him on June 20, 1849, was that he had not sent to Washington a list of his employees. (The charge was true, as were others; such as Weller being delinquent in his accounts and that his commission was poorly organized and wracked by dissension.[22]) **H. H. (Henry Harrison) Robinson** (1815–after 1880?) had been editor of the *Eagle*, a Democratic weekly newspaper published in Lancaster prior to his California adventure.[23] After his stint with the commission, Robinson put in an unsuccessful bid to serve as a delegate to the constitutional convention, but later ran successfully for the plum job of state printer. He resigned very soon, in May 1850.[24] Effinger's letters make frequent mention of his friend Robinson, who sent dispatches from California to the *Cincinnati Enquirer* and perhaps to other newspapers.[25]

Apparently, John Weller and **E. K. Chamberlin** were acquainted before Weller's appointment to head the Boundary Commission. Effinger refers to him only as "Dr. Chamberlin" and reports that some people called him "Old Medicine," but a single autograph receipt for fifteen dollars that had been charged to Effinger "for professional services" in Panama, April 9, 1849, is signed by Dr. E. K. Chamberlin and is part of the Effinger Papers. Almost surely the same Dr. E. K. Chamberlin was married on May 29, 1836, to Susan P. Clark of Chester County, Pennsylvania. The groom was identified as one of the editors of the *Fallston & Brighton Gazette*, published in the western Pennsylvania town of Fallston in Beaver County, where the wedding took place.[26]

Oliver S. Witherby (1815–1896), an Ohio associate of Weller's, served as quartermaster and commissary to the Boundary Commission. After graduation from Miami University (where he met Effinger's brother Michael), Witherby studied and practiced law, edited a newspaper, and served in the Mexican-American War. Once the commission's work was done, Witherby chose to stay in San Diego, serving as a delegate to the constitutional convention in Monterey, becoming a judge, collector of customs, and a ranchero, at El Rincón del Diablo at Escondido. A popular and well-respected citizen through his numerous careers, Witherby sold the ranch and bought real estate in San Diego, took up banking, promoted railroads and through it all, became one of the wealthiest men in the Southwest. The economic depression of the early 1890s brought an end to his fabulous wealth, but did nothing to diminish Witherby's influence and reputation in many San Diego circles.[27]

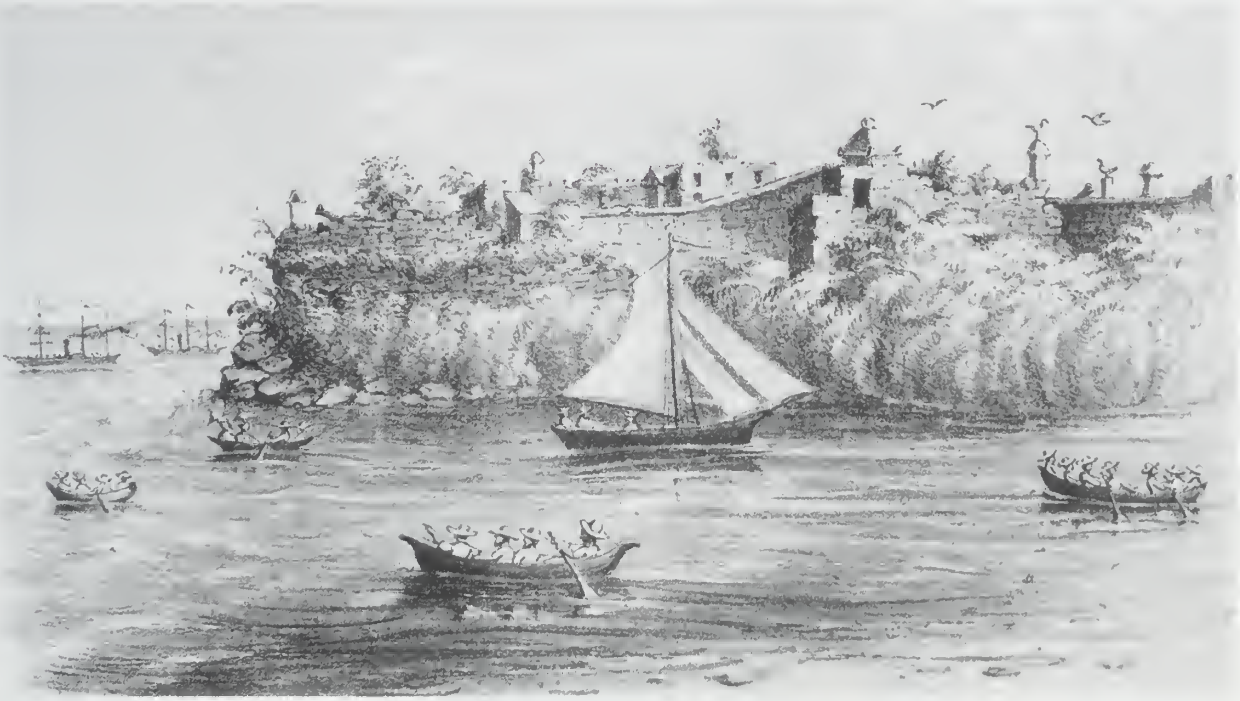
Major Washington Seawell (1802?–1888) was a graduate of West Point who served a long if not glorious career in the army. An officer with Zachary Taylor's army of occupation during the Mexican-American War, by 1849 he was on his way to California for a posting at Benicia, with subsequent long service at Fort Davis, Texas, and eventually back to California as Brevet Brigadier-General and Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General at San Francisco at the end of the Civil War. He died in San Francisco.

Tom Wilson, one of the "Lancaster Boys," must have been a favorite of Effinger's or of someone in his family. The writer's compassion for the unlucky Mr. Wilson is demonstrated in repeated references throughout the Effinger letters.

Edward George Earle Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873), became Baron Lytton of Knebworth in 1866. His novels of manners such as *Falkland* (1827), *Paul Clifford* (1830), and *Eugene Aram* (1832) and his historical novels such as *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) and *Rienzi* (1835) were enormously popular, and his writing is known for evocative and perhaps overblown descriptions. *Paul Clifford* begins, famously, with the words, "It was a dark and stormy night . . . ."[28]

Yellow boys: gold coins, originally referring to guineas or sovereigns.

Panama



After ten long days at sea, the steamship *Alabama* stopped at the mouth of the river Chagres. Panama, reputed to be a "charnel house," proved to be a pleasant surprise. Effinger described the sights for his family: "Immediately at the mouth of the river Chagres, there is a considerable eminence upon which is situated an old and well-constructed fort. This fortification is manned with the finest pieces of brass cannon and mortars that I have ever seen, some of which were made more than a century ago." "Entrance to the River Chagres," California Historical Society, FN-35491.

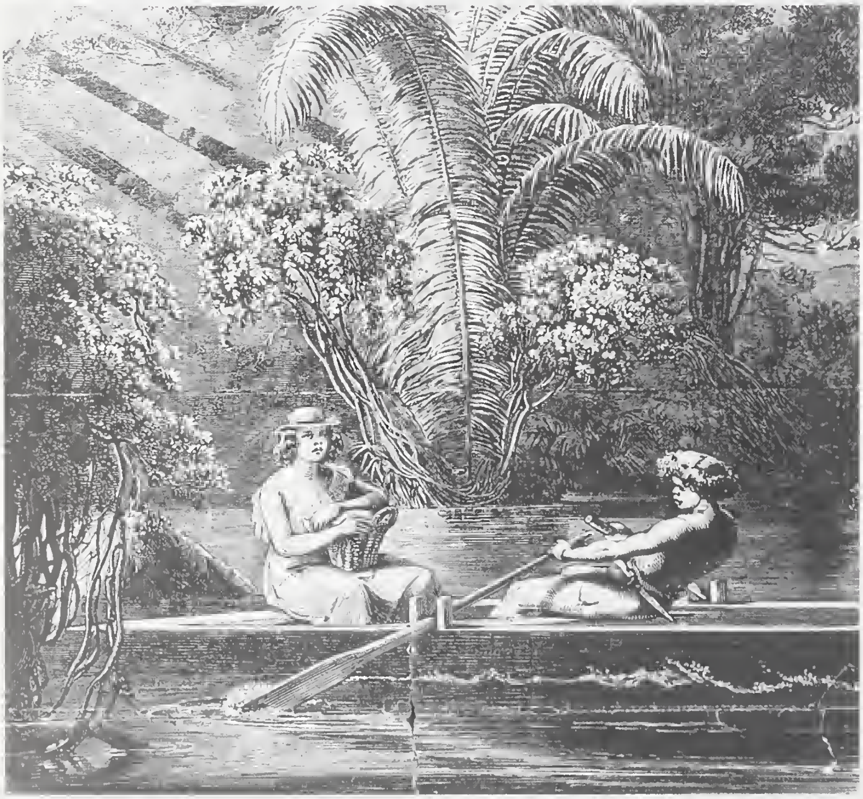
March 27th 1849
Panama, Núeva Granada

Dear Brother,
I wrote to you by return of the steamship *Alabama*, giving you an account of my voyage across the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, and I was in hopes that I would have it in my power to send you a full description of the Isthmus of Panama by return of the same vessel. But being from choice, and not from necessity, ten days in crossing the Isthmus and not wishing to send you a partial description of this singular and wonderful country, I have deferred writing until I have had the opportunity of seeing the whole of it. Let me in the outset assure you that you can no more form an idea of this country from a description than you can have a conception of pleasure without ever having experienced it. I propose simply to give you a recital of the facts, which I have seen and in which I have taken an active part.

We came in sight of the Isthmus of Panama on the 12th of March, at about nine o'clock in the morning. We coasted along until about three o'clock p.m. before we came in sight of Chagres. It was a pleasant sight after ten long and dreary days at sea to come in view of land—and such a land—covered with the richest and most luxuriant vegetation, a garden of Eden teeming with all the luscious fruits of a tropical climate, a land filled with the most delicate plants and flowers of every variety, none of which I had ever seen and many of which I had never heard of. We stopped within about two miles of the mouth of the river Chagres. Captain Tucker, who is the commander of the *Orus*, now running up the Chagres River, came out in his yawl and piloted us into the river. There is no harbor at Chagres and it is therefore exceedingly dangerous to land outside of the river as the wrecks of two vessels on the coast plainly testify. Never was a set of men more agreeably disappointed in a place than we were at Chagres. Before we arrived there our only prayer was that we might meet with some speedy conveyance to take us away from this reputed charnel house. And there was the steamer *Orus* with steam up, just ready to go; but immediately upon our arrival we became equally solicitous to remain for a few days. Instead of finding Chagres the miserable slimy mud hole that it has been represented to be, we found it with the exception of Panama to be one of the most interesting and pretty spots on the Isthmus. Immediately at the mouth of the river Chagres, there is a considerable eminence upon which is situated an old and well-constructed fort. This fortification is manned with the finest pieces of brass cannon and mortars that I have ever seen, some of which were made more than a century ago. Just in the rear of this eminence and on both sides of the river, Chagres is situated. The houses are all composed of thatched huts, a fair copy specimen of one of which I will enclose you in this letter.

The natives are principally black and many naked as on the day God made them. Children, until they arrive at the age of six or seven, never know what it is to have a rag on their back. The natives however do not resemble the African Negro in any other respect than that of color. They have more vivacity, more animation, better features, and greater strength. Those who do wear clothes have them universally made of linen, consisting of a pair of pantaloons and a shirt, the tail of the latter sticking out answering the purpose of a shirttail and coat tail at the same time. The legs on the pants do not extend any further down than their knees, being more convenient to tuck up when they wish to "wade in and pound out." A coarse straw hat or more frequently a bare head, and you have everything which composes the costume and appearance of the natives of Chagres.

The female portion of the town is far more interesting. Some of the señoritas are very pretty: many of them have a clear, dark olive complexion with long, straight, black hair. I cannot give you a better idea of their style of dress than an American shimmy (now Maggie don't blush) bordered around the neck with wide lace in some respects resembling the long cape worn in the U.S. This dress is made so loose and long that it hangs upon them like a shirt upon a pole, exposing about one half of their backs and busts and about one third of their legs. They have very small feet and generally wear highly colored slips without stockings. Their figures are plump, round, and fat. They invariably dress in white and keep themselves, their dress at least, very neat and clean. A girl of about ten or twelve, is as well developed as an American woman would be at the age of eighteen or twenty; and when a woman here arrives at the age of forty-five or fifty, she is as much shriveled up and bowed down as the oldest of our American women. It was a pretty sight, as we landed, to see the natives standing on the banks of the river with their little children running naked and half wild about them; and I assure you it was not



"Some of the señoritas are very pretty: many of them have a clear, dark olive complexion with long, straight, black hair. I cannot give you a better idea of their style of dress than an American shimmy (now Maggie don't blush) bordered around the neck with wide lace." "River Scene on the Isthmus of Panama," California Historical Society, FN-35957.

many minutes before I, in company with several others, found my way on shore to examine more minutely the curiosities of the place.

The first thing that attracted my attention was the funeral ceremonies of a little child. Some fifty or sixty persons were gathered about a hut, in which lay the mortal remains of a dead baby, done up in all the gaudy ribbons and fancy colored scraps that the town could afford. On its head was placed a kind of three-cornered cocked hat and its whole dress resembled some fantastic uniform rather than shroud. Outside of the house sat two natives playing all kinds of fancy tunes on their fiddles, accompanied by a rudely constructed drum and some other instruments, which beats my time to name, never having seen the like before. The whole ceremony seemed more like a jollification at a wedding than the solemnities of a funeral. But upon inquiry I ascertained that it was always their habit to rejoice at the death of an infant for the simple reason that its soul has certainly gone to Heaven. Well, so I thought that would do and passed on.

The next thing that attracted my attention was the fact that every hut or *casa* had connected with it, as a part of its household furniture, a hog, a dog, and a game cock. A New Granada hog is a singular specimen of the swine genus to one accustomed to the fine breed we have in America. I have heard tell of a half-starved Irish pig; but had it not have been for the unmistakable grunt, I should certainly have classified the hogs in Chagres among the Rhinoceros species only of the human kind. Why you could split a rail with the sharp ends of their backs, use their long snouts as a crowbar and shave shingles with their pointed hams. In point of bones and want of flesh a "living skeleton" wouldn't stand any comparison with them. Most of the dogs are like the one brought me from Mexico known and designated, if I recollect rightly, by the lofty cognomen of Santa Asina. You may look into any *casa* and you will find these dogs and hogs lazing quietly and undisturbed in the best part of the house and the little children lolling and rolling over them. As I remarked before, every man has his gamecock, which is invariably fastened by a string on one leg to the front door sill and considered as indispensable as we would the most useful and necessary article of furniture. Cock fighting is one of their principal sources of amusements, a Sunday's diversion after Mass. In the evening, I attended a fandango, which to say the most of it was a dull affair. So many citizens from the States crowd into them as to wholly Americanize them and as a consequence destroy the novelty. The inhabitants of Chagres are an orderly, honest, and very clever set of people. Seeing that the Americans are a go-ahead, impetuous people, they have just sense enough to take advantage of their impatience and desire for locomotion to make all the money off of them they can; and so it is throughout the whole of Nueva Granada. While in Chagres I saw Dr. Smith of Newark, also lying sick with typhus fever in its most malignant form. He was attacked just after leaving the Balize, at the mouth of the Mississippi. Several young men from Newark were with him; but no hopes were entertained of his recovery.

It may be possible that I saw Chagres at the most favorable time; but I am told by all with whom I have conversed on the subject, that a correct report was never given of this place, that at no time in the years is its condition such as has been represented. The situation of the town and the appearance of its inhabitants all contradict the rumors, which you have so frequently heard in the States. I must say that as much as I desired expedition in my route to California, I left Chagres with the regret that I had not a few days' longer time given me to examine the curiosities of the place.

On the morning of the 13th, the day after we arrived at Chagres, we took passage on board the steamer *Orus* for Gorgona—and here let me remark that a greater humbug than this self-same steamer *Orus* was never started forth by Yankee ingenuity and enterprise. In the first and most important point, it can never be of any practical utility to passengers either in expedition or economy, for the simple reason that the Chagres River is not and never can be made navigable for more than twenty or twenty-five miles, and this distance can be made by the native canoe in much quicker time, with less expense and by a more comfortable way of traveling. So that by taking passage on the steamer *Orus*, you have to pay more and really travel with less expedition and comfort than in the native's canoe.

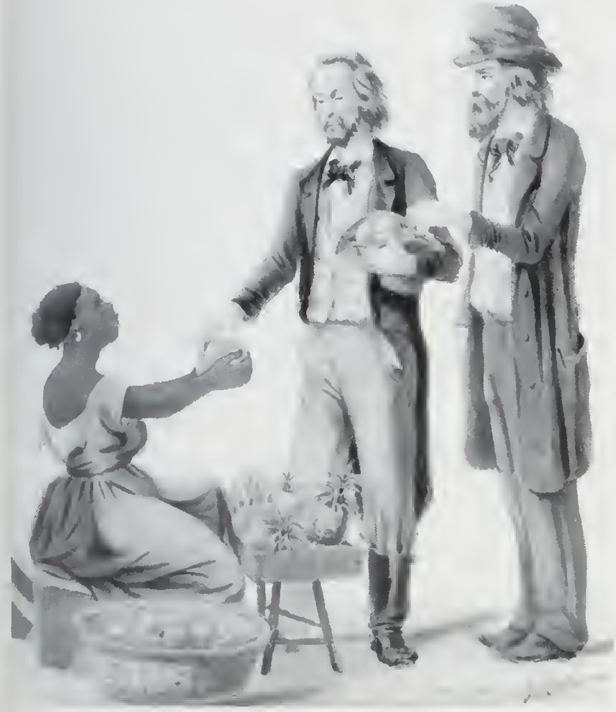
By the time my letter reaches you, you will have no doubt read in many of our public journals much more beautiful and perfect descriptions of the river Chagres than I can give you; but whatever account you may hear if it, however fancifully and highly wrought they may be, they will certainly fall short of the reality.

"Instead of finding Chagres the miserable slimy mud hole that it has been represented to be, we found . . . one of the most interesting and pretty spots on the Isthmus."

Why just imagine a beautiful clear stream, so pure and clear that you can see in the bottom the clean nice gravel over which it runs, kept in its channel, not by banks, but by the growth of all the richest and most beautiful plants, vines, flowers, and roses in the vegetable kingdom, the boughs and branches of the trees overhanging the river, as if they would be glad to shake hands and embrace the limbs of their opposite neighbors. The vines along the Chagres River do not content themselves by creeping lazily up a few feet and then wither and die, but they go on shooting upward and upward until they can no longer find trees tall enough to cling to and then they creep downward until they loose themselves in the ripples of this beautiful river. Just in the rear of these vegetable banks (I can give them no other name, for the vegetation is so thick and luxuriant that you can see no earth at all), you can see the tops of the cocoa and **flora** trees. A flora tree (the botanical name I cannot give you—I give you the names of things as I learned them from the natives) is something like our umbrella tree at the top; but its height is generally from forty to sixty feet. The whole top of the tree is covered by a profusion of the richest flowers I ever beheld. In some spots you will see acres covered with these beautiful trees, the body of the tree is as straight as an arrow and as perfectly rounded and smoothed off as the main mast of a ship. What adds so much to the beauty of the scenery along the Chagres River is the fact that you see nothing that you have ever seen before. Everywhere around, you can see birds of every variety, the names of which my limited knowledge of ornithology will not permit me to give you.

As I stated before, the steamer *Orus* engages to take you to Gorgona, for which they charge you ten dollars; but as they are only able to take you some eleven miles up the river, you are at last compelled to take the native's canoe for the balance of the journey, which is about thirty-one miles further. In order to have transportation in readiness, they generally tow up from forty to sixty canoes with the natives in them. How I only wish I could present you this picture as it really appeared to me. A fine little steamer, slowly gliding up this beautiful river, with about forty canoes behind you, manned by 140 natives, all of whom are naked with the exception of a few who wear a breech cloth, keeping up an incessant gibberish of Spanish, constantly in dread of some fearful accident. Every turn that the steamer makes (and every turn in the Chagres River is a right angle) some half-dozen canoes become filled with water, the steamer stops until matters are put right again, while the natives in their peculiar and animated manner, with their wild gesticulations, blame one another for an accident altogether unavoidable. I stood behind a young gentleman from New York, an excellent draftsman, while he was drawing this motley scene from the stern of our boat; but with all his genius he could not do justice to the subject; he could not give the wild and excited appearance of the natives, and the loud laughing and buzzing of the Americans standing on the deck and enjoying the scene. The natives cannot understand how it is that Captain Tucker, the commander of the *Orus*, can have the power while standing in the stern of the boat to stop her by simply singing out "Stop, Stop." They regard him as a superhuman being and fear him accordingly.

I shot an alligator, about ten feet in length, going up the river, and it was the only I saw. The evening of the 13th, I remained all night at a very pretty Indian village, situated on the first bluff that is to be seen after leaving Chagres, and it was here that I first saw the kind of food the natives ate and the manner in which they prepared it. In no part of Nueva Granada that I have seen or heard of do they pay any attention to the cultivation of the soil. Nature furnishes them with everything necessary for their sustenance and with ten fold more than they absolutely need. As soon, therefore, as we landed, I saw the natives start out in pursuit of something to furnish them their evening's food. They soon returned with their plantains, **yamas**, rice, bananas, mangoes, breadfruit, coconuts, and a variety of other tropical fruits the names of which it was beyond my comprehension to learn. The first process is to extract the milk from the coconut. They then grate the meat of the coconut, press from it all the juice and throw away the pulp, and in this they boil their rice, *yamas*, and plantains. Sometimes they purchase a few feet of jerked beef and boil this in the same way. I need not add that, barring their neatness and cleanliness, they prepare a very nice meal and have a jolly time of it. Among other things, which I saw them cook, I must not forget to mention some nice-looking roasting ears and a species of tomato. Just think of it, corn and tomatoes early in March.



Panama "teems with all the luscious fruits of a tropical climate, . . . none of which I had ever seen and many of which I had never heard of." The title of this lithograph suggests that some of the fruit may have been used to cure the fevers that afflicted thousands traveling through Panama—including Effinger. *"Partidarios del sistema antiflogistico,"* California Historical Society, FN-35928.

April 9th 1849

On the first day of April last I was taken sick with a very severe attack of **intermittent fever** from which I am just recovering. I am anxious, however, that you should hear from me, and I shall endeavor to finish my letter today although it is against the command of any physicians. My fever has been broken, but in this climate when one is taken sick it so enfeebles him that it takes a long time to recover. I suffered dreadfully during my illness. There seemed to be a determination of blood to the head and it was my brain that was principally affected. For five days and nights I neither ate nor slept. I was blistered and plastered and cupped all over and took more medicine than in my whole life put together. I entertain no doubt but that in a few days I shall have my usual health and strength. Up to the hour I was taken sick no man who has started for California enjoyed better health. But the 1st of April (Sunday) was a great day here among the Catholics, and I exposed myself entirely too much, being in the sun all day with no other covering than a nice, snug little Panama hat I bought here, and I'm afraid it let the fever in.

But to proceed with my narrative: on the morning of the 14th in company with Jim Myers and Ferguson I took a canoe for Gorgona. We were polled up by three strong natives. As you advance further up the Chagres River the stream becomes in places exceedingly rapid, and it requires all the muscular power that the natives can exert to keep the canoe moving along.

I find that I will not have sufficient strength to finish my letter. I shall not let the present opportunity go by without letting you hear from me. As I gain strength I shall continue to write you.

The Lord only knows how long I may be detained at Panama.

Very affectionately,
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

Nueva Granada: At the time, Panama was a province of the Republic of Nueva Granada, later Colombia.

The *Orus*, a wooden side-wheel steamer previously working New York environs, was put into service on the Chagres River as one of the earliest attempts to improve the Panamanian route to California.[29]

Flora tree: Effinger's flora tree may have been the ceibo (*Ceiba pentandra*) or cativo (*Prioria copaifera*).

Yamas: Effinger is probably referring to *ñames* , or yams, which the *Oxford English Dictionary* describes as "the starchy tuberous root of various species of *Dioscorea*, largely cultivated for food in tropical and subtropical countries, where it takes the place of the potato."

"Intermittent fever" is a term used frequently to describe the malady suffered by many in Panama. It may have been malaria, which was reported to be "the only endemic and common disease of the Isthmus." Another likely possibility is basically what Effinger described: overexertion and being unaccustomed to the climate.[30]

April 12th 1849
Panama, New Granada

Dear Brother,

When I last wrote to you under the date of April 9, I was just recovering from a very severe attack of sickness, which at that time I supposed to have been intermittent fever. But I have subsequently been informed by Dr. Chamberlin that my case was a severe attack of **congestion of the brain**, that seeing that I was of the impression that it was intermittent fever he did not wish to undeceive me as it was all important that my mind should be as quiet and undisturbed as possible. My health is now completely restored, but I am quite slow in gaining my usual strength, but hope in a few days to be as strong as usual and again deserve the soubriquet given me by my friend Mr. William Jenkins of the "Iron Man."

If I recollect rightly, I closed my last narrative by placing myself in company with Ferguson and Myers in one of the natives' canoes in route for **Gorgona**. The Chagres River about sixteen miles from its mouth becomes a very rapid stream, and it is therefore necessary in going up the stream to use long poles instead of oars. Its depth varies nearly every two hundred yards, but its plain beautiful gravel bottom (or rather pebble bottom—for the stones are composed of beautifully rounded pebbles) continues the whole way. At places there are strong riffles in the river where the current is so rapid as not only to require all the strength but ingenuity of the natives to overcome it, and if a pole happens to slip away down the stream you go at least one hundred yards before you recover. The navigation of the Chagres River is no child's play as the swelling muscles, heaving chest, and short breath of the natives testify as they apply their shoulders to their poles and gradually heave you up the stream. The natives when they commence working strip themselves stark naked. The hot sun, which in less than an hour's time had scorched my hands and face into blisters, has no more effect upon them than to simply dry up the perspiration. Occasionally when they become overheated they dive head foremost in the water and remain under for at least a half-minute. This I suppose is the cooling process.

About two o'clock in the afternoon we stopped at a little Indian village to get a bite to eat, and while it was under preparation I took a stroll toward a high bluff, which bordered the village. When I arrived at the brink of the bluff I saw a sight, which would make many a man less modest than myself feel rather queer and funny. Down a little valley not fifty feet from where I stood I saw at least twenty señoritas stark naked just cooling themselves off in a pretty clear mountain rivulet. The water was not more than knee deep and they were kneeling down sousing themselves by pouring gourds full of water on top of their heads, and this operation was kept up so fast that an ordinary waterfowl would have been drowned by the process. Some few of the girls were standing just on the brink of the stream washing clothes. I stood for some time enjoying the scene until at last they detected me and such a scampering after shifts and shirts you never did see. After they had each of them put on a shirt they gave me a very polite invitation to come in and bathe with them. I need not add that it did not require much urging to make me accept their very polite invitation. These people spend about one third of their time in the water, and indeed it is the only pleasant way of living in this hot country. In the evening I went supperless to bed on a sand bar.

On the morning of the 15th we renew our journey and when we arrive within about four miles of Gorgona I got the natives to land us and conclude to walk the rest of the way. I had not proceeded many miles before I repented my indiscretions. I knew that their woods were filled with snakes, lizards, and all kind of poisonous reptiles, but I was not aware that a person runs the risk of encountering a **tiger** which though not numerous are frequently found in their forests. I had left my gun in the canoe, the weather being excessively hot and not wishing to be encumbered by it. No one can form an opinion of the density of their forests; it is almost impossible to penetrate them. Dr. Chamberlin in walking over the same route that I came shot a tiger and a monkey. I arrived at Gorgona about noon completely fatigued and worn out. Many of our party did not reach Gorgona until the next day. This village is situated upon a high bluff and contains about 600 inhabitants who differ very little either in appearance or habits from the inhabitants of Chagres. At the time I arrived at Gorgona there were about 300 Americans encamped there, and we pitched our tents among the rest and commenced camp life. We heard the most discouraging news in reference to our getting away from Panama, all of which proved to be too true, as I shall tell you when I come to speak of Panama. I remained at Gorgona four days, as I saw there would be nothing gained by hurrying over to **Panama**. I boarded most of the time at the alcalde's, who has four wives and nineteen children by one wife and who is of course the greatest man in town. Many very interesting incidents occurred during my stay at Gorgona all of which I noted down with particularity and care but I have really not the strength to give them to you now.

On the 21st I started for Panama by myself having in charge a train of ten mules carrying stores belonging to J. B. Weller's U.S. Commission. Each mule carried two whole barrels and a small package in the center. It is cruel the way they load mules in this country. The girths around them wear their bellies as raw as a piece of beefsteak while the crupper under the tail absolutely lays bare the backbone. But the queerest sight is to see the larger packages the natives carry fastened by a little wicker basket on their shoulders. I have seen them pack off loads that would make two good stout men grunt to lift and yet they carry them two miles. The whole road between Gorgona and Panama is filled with mule trains and men: trains going and coming. I was mounted on a little jackass, and if he didn't get his ass jacked before I reached Panama it was no fault of mine. The appearance of the

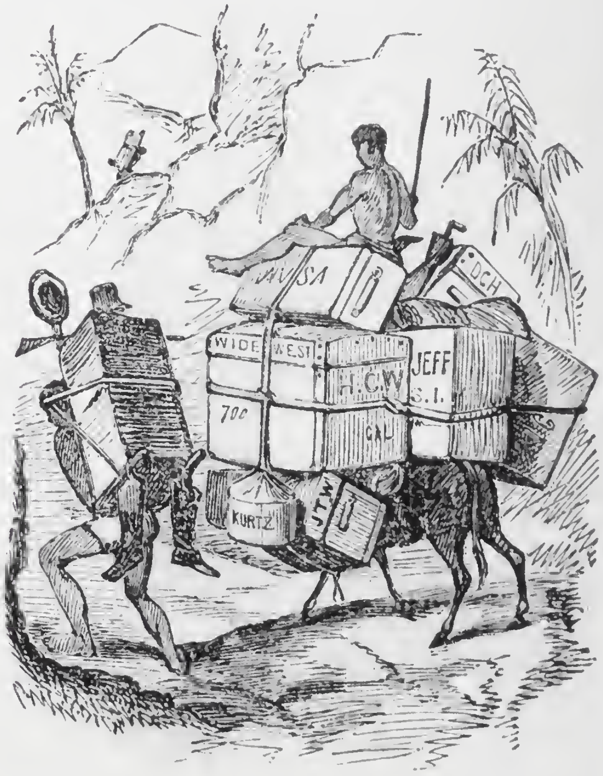
"I saw at least twenty señoritas stark naked just cooling themselves off in a pretty clear mountain rivulet."

country between Gorgona and Panama like all the scenery here baffles description. Whenever you reach a high point where you can make a survey you can see stretched out in a long range little mountains all topped off like a sugar loaf, covered all over with the most beautiful vegetation. The road leads over and along and around these mountains. Occasionally you descend into a deep ravine where [run] rivers as clear and limpid streams of water as ever the eye gazed upon or as ever quenched the parched thirst of the weary traveler. These streams occur at intervals of every four or five miles. One of the prettiest and brightest features in this country is the clear and pretty streams by which it is watered.

The road is just such an one as any man of sense could imagine it to be when he is informed that it is a path that the mules originally selected to travel, and if there is any bad picking with mulish instinct, they found it out. The only real bad and dangerous part of the road is the descent of the hills for they are not only steep but worn in steps. But as bad as this road is represented to be and as bad as it really is, it can be walked in eight hours (and this is by far the pleasantest way to travel it) and a good mule can make the distance (twenty-two miles) in six hours. At the time I came over, dead mules were strewn all along the road having been permitted to lie just where they dropped dead—the stench arising from their putrefied carcasses was not calculated to appease a ravenous appetite although the buzzards fared sumptuously every day. My pack mules became exhausted, and I was compelled to stop within four miles of Panama and sleep on the bare ground with no other covering than the broad canopy of heaven, and even this in this country could be very well dispensed with. I don't mind sleeping in the open air, but this thing of having lizards crawling all over one I did at first object to but finally submitted from the sheer necessity of the thing.

When you come within about three miles of Panama, you strike into a broad open road and country, and for the first time in the whole transit of the Isthmus see some evidence of civilization. You can see the gray old towers of Panama, the roofs of the antiquated houses and the huge wall that surrounds the city. It is certainly the funniest looking place I ever saw; it is more funny than curious. Describe one house and you have a description of every dwelling in the city and so with the churches. Their houses are generally three stories high with a court inside. The aristocracy lives in the third story, the second best in the second story, and the plebeians or servants in the basement. Running around the second and third stories is a wide balcony; the houses being constructed upon the principle to live out of doors as much as possible and at the same time live in a house. This city was built better than a century and a half ago, and not one repair has been made to it since it was finished. Why just imagine what an appearance any city in Ohio would present permitted to go to waste for 150 years. The whole place gives evidence of former wealth and even grandeur.

I took my quarters immediately after my arrival in the city among some of my acquaintances in a large, fine room situated about 150 yards from the Pacific. I pay for my quarters ten cents per day and board around at the different restaurants, which costs me from sixty to seventy-five cents per day. In this way I not only live well but cheaply. Nearly every morning I take a bath in the Pacific. I live so close to the beach that I generally



Once he had recovered enough from "intermittent fever," which was, perhaps, malaria, Effinger shepherded ten mules laden with the Boundary Commission's supplies across the isthmus. "Each mule carried two whole barrels and a small package in the center. It is cruel the way they load mules in this country. The girths around them wear their bellies as raw as a piece of beefsteak." "Past Glory of the Isthmus," California Historical Society, FN-35959.

jump out of bed in my drawers, run down and take a bath, and then come back and dress. Aside from the churches and their religious form of worship, there is but little to be said concerning the local affairs of this city. There are about twenty churches in the city, and for every church there are about four bells and some of them are the finest toned bells I ever heard in my life. It seems to me that they are ringing almost constantly, the natives thinking that it keeps the devil out of the city. This being Lent the people seem to live in their churches. Mass is said every morning at six o'clock, and this is the only opportunity we have to see the aristocracy of the place. The women dress in the richest yet neatest kind of style, but I cannot pronounce any eulogy on their beauty. They generally have the appearance of our old maids, look jaded and worn out, you don't see in them the freshness and vivacity of our pretty American girls.

In this place one can form an opinion of a country governed by the Catholic persuasion. Why, there is no set of heathens in Christ's kingdom who are guiltier of worshiping images than the people of this country. Their churches are filled with them, and they bow down and worship these just as the Hindu does his idol god. The first day of April was Palm Sunday and is the greatest day here in the whole year. Toward evening a large procession formed outside of the city to welcome the coming of Jesus Christ. The procession must have amounted to more than six thousand persons. In a little while after this vast assemblage of people outside the city had been formed, our Savior appeared mounted on an ass surrounded by all the priests and potentates in the state of Panama. They had a waxen figure with long curling hair set astride of a jackass to represent the Savior. As the crowd moved through the city, hundreds of females preceded him sprinkling the most beautiful flowers in his path. Every housetop and plaza was filled with anxious and joyous faces. The bells kept up a devil of a ringing and if the Savior had absolutely appeared the people could not have been more rejoiced and made more fuss about it. In the course of the week they crucified him and then raised him from the dead and then as the great finale they hung Judas Iscariot in the most public plaza in the city. I only wish I had time and felt well enough to give you a full description of this farce, although I know it would tax your credibility to believe one half-that I should tell you. It was following after this big procession bare headed, for they made every body take off their hats that I think produced my congestion of the brain. The principal amusement in this city is cock fighting and a South American circus, and Sunday is the great day set apart for the sports.

Effinger recounts that most of the "Lancaster Boys" had embarked at New Orleans on the Maria Burt *with all of Effinger's baggage and supplies. Serious leaks required the ship to return to New Orleans, where the Ohio men chose a Mexican overland route to California, so that Effinger was left with minimal personal belongings and meager means. To make matters worse, the government ship that was supposed to transport the Weller party to San Diego was much delayed. Finding himself stranded along with 2,500 others at rainy Panama City, and with slim prospects for securing quick passage on a vessel to San Francisco, Effinger was feeling dejected, and he toyed with the idea of waiting only until May 1 before throwing his lot with others in turning back to the United States. Meanwhile, he was "comfortably situated" and made the best of things by "trading and scrounging" and surmising that whenever the* California *or another streamer arrived, he would be "one to step in" and would reach California with Commission members.*

Away down here on this hot Isthmus—where after six a.m. the rays of the sun come pouring down like the heat in a reflector and where it is unsafe to venture out before six in the evening and where as a consequence you are necessarily cooped up in the house much of the day—I often think of family matters and of the changes which must necessarily take place before I see any of you again. Although I have not been absent quite three months, it seems to me an age. I have traveled through such a variety of scenery and climate, have been subjected to so many trials and inconveniences, have fared so sumptuously and then been starved, have in the space of four weeks been subjected to the extreme of heat and cold, in fine have seen and felt so much that I feel like a different person. My personal appearance has undergone such a change that I think you would scarcely recognize me. I support a very handsome curled mustache, dress in the loose pantaloons and open sack coat made here and worn by the better class of natives, wear a nice little panama hat which together with my dark swarthy complexion makes me more resemble a Spaniard than a civilized American citizen. I only wish I could convey to you an idea of the intense heat in this country. You have felt hot sultry days at home in the month of August where there was not a breath of air stirring. Here we have pretty much all the time a brisk Pacific sea breeze, but then the air is blown upon us as if from a fiery furnace. But I have now been on the Isthmus thirty-one days and am becoming a little accustomed to it.

Give my love to **Mother**, **Mary** & **Eddy**, to **Michael**, **Elmyra**, **Maggie**, and **Sarah**.

Your Affectionate Brother,
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

Congestion of the brain: Congestion of the brain was a term used for hydrocephalus or meningitis.

Gorgona: Because of her draft, the *Orus* could not complete the trip to Gorgona, so travelers transferred to canoes called *bungos*, or put their baggage in the canoes and walked the rest of the way, as Effinger did. Soon, several smaller steamers were on the river between Chagres and Gorgona, and the isthmian passage was further facilitated first with improvements to land transport in the form of regularized mule trains and road building, and ultimately with the completion of the Panama Railroad in 1855.[31]

Tiger: Panama's rainforest is extremely diverse: the "tiger" Effinger mentions might have been a jaguar, jaguarundi (otter cat), puma, or ocelot. Six species of monkeys are there: howler, tamarind, squirrel, owl, and spider monkeys. On the ground, an array of reptiles and amphibians includes several varieties of turtles and tortoises, crocodiles, snakes, geckos, and iguanas. The three-toed sloth lives in treetops.

Panama: Panama (City), almost two hundred years old when Effinger arrived, had been an important colonial port, and as Argonauts noted, still something of a metropolis even though the population was no more than ten thousand. With the Gold Rush traffic came bloated population consisting of travelers waiting for ships to arrive in port and with them, the hurly burly of adventure and much wilder times than the city had seen for many years. The price Effinger paid for room and board was the going rate; about eight dollars per week covered hotel or pension accommodations and restaurant fare.

Mother, **Mary** & **Eddy**, **Michael**, **Elmyra**, **Maggie**, and **Sarah**: See note on the Effinger family, page 11. "Brother Michael," the addressee of about half of the letters "Uncle Pat" wrote, was a leading citizen of Lancaster until his death. He had inherited the family home upon his father's death, and was married in the house to Elmira Catlin, where his boyhood friend, William Tecumseh Sherman, and Robert shared the privilege of serving as best man. Michael and Elmira's first-born Sarah C., known as Tella (1847– ?), was born in the house her grandfather built, raised there, and returned there after attending Emma Willard's Female Seminary in Troy, NY. She also was married there. She chronicled a good deal of family history and Civil War observation in diaries she wrote as a teenager and young woman.[33]

April 19th 1849
Panama, Nueva Grenada

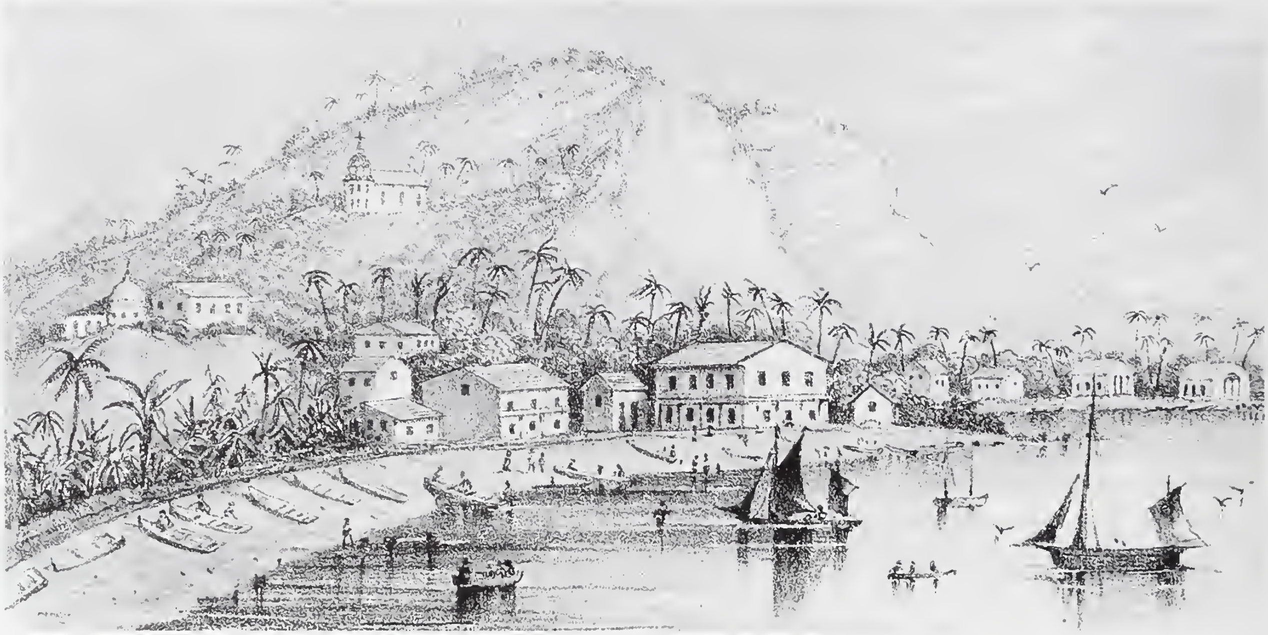
Dear Brother,
There are many things calculated to produce sickness here, some of which I shall enumerate. In Panama there is no water, the spot upon which the city is situated being a solid rock from thirty to fifty feet in depth covered only with a few feet of earth. It is therefore impracticable if not impossible for these indolent natives to dig for water. The water that is used is brought from a running stream and several springs a few miles from the city in large earthen jars by mules and on the backs of natives. In consequence of the increased demand for water by the immense emigration of Americans to this place, many of the springs become exhausted, and the natives who have not the energy or enterprise to increase their means of conveyance have commenced bringing water from the sluggish pools in and about the city. As a matter of course drinking such stuff as this would make the devil sick or at least a little bilious.

Add to this the Americans will eat great quantities of the tropical fruits which grow in such abundance here and which can be obtained for a mere song. Great quantities of watermelons are now brought to the market and the way they are eaten beats the old-fashioned general muster days we used to see at home. By far the richest fruit that grows in this country is the pineapple. They are very large—and oh, deliciously luscious. Next to the pineapple is the breadfruit, which in taste somewhat resembles our clingstone peach. It is about the size of a golden pippin and has a seed in it as large as a walnut. They are mighty nice, I tell you.

Another cause of sickness is too much exposure to the sun. Why, when I came to Panama my usual good health had been so improved by exercise and travel that I thought nothing could hurt me, and day after day I ran about here at all hours of the day and night when the sun shone the hottest and the dews fell the fastest, but you see I acted imprudently and am now suffering the consequences. And so it is with hundreds of Americans on the Isthmus. Too much exercise produces sickness, and this was one of my follies, but you see I am learning by experience.

One of the great luxuries in this place is their fine tobacco. It seems to me that I never enjoyed a good genuine smoke until I came here. I only wish I had the opportunity to send you several thousand segars, and then how you could luxuriate on Sundays. One great treat that we receive here in Panama is the fine serenades that the natives give us about three times a week. I never in my life heard more beautiful music than these people draw from the violin, the flute, and the guitar. These are the only instruments that are used in their churches, and when a man once becomes a good performer on any of them, his fortune is made. They can play all the fashionable polkas and waltzes that we are accustomed to hear in the States. Every Sunday evening they give a concert at the Hotel de Americano for the benefit of Americans who are sick and destitute, and with this exception all their serenades and concerts are gratuitous.

"Hurrah for me! . . . Today I succeeded by ingenuity and a little skillful management to take charge of all the government stores belonging to the United States Commission."



"I took my quarters [in Panama City] in a large, fine room situated about 150 yards from the Pacific. Nearly every morning I take a bath in the Pacific. I live so close to the beach that I generally jump out of bed in my drawers, run down and take a bath, and then come back and dress." "Eastern Suburb of Panama, Railway Terminus on the Right," California Historical Society, FN-35491.

April 20th 1849

Hurrah for me! I knew I only wanted about three well days to make some speculation or take some extraordinary step on my way to fortune. Today I succeeded by ingenuity and a little skillful management to obtain from Colonel Weller the appointment of taking charge of all the government stores belonging to the United States Commission. They are now being put aboard of the schooner *Two Friends* and tomorrow I take a nice, snug cabin passage along with them and set sail on Sunday (22nd April) for San Francisco. The whole Commission is going to San Francisco instead of San Diego as at first contemplated.

In addition to this good stroke of fortune I have been offered a situation in Colonel Weller's Commission, which I may or may not accept, depending on the state of things in California. Colonel Weller has secured passages for most of his men on board the steamer ***California***. This vessel has not arrived yet. What detains her no one knows. It is conjectured that her crew deserted her, some think she has run out of coal, one thing is certain: she has not arrived yet and neither has she been heard from.

You must not expect to hear from me now for a long time. I will arrive at San Francisco about the middle of June, and this will be the first opportunity I shall have for writing. Just think of it, among all those who have arrived on this Isthmus, and some have been here since the first of January, I will be one of the first to get away, and add to that I have a very snug little office. I certainly won't starve for I have charge over provisions for forty men for three months. Maybe if I get right hungry, I wouldn't cut into a nice sugar cured ham and knock the lid off a box of claret.

A few days ride on the noble Pacific will completely restore my health and then "Richard will be himself again."

In great haste
Your affct Bro
R. P. Effinger

On April 20, Effinger wrote home with excitement about the quick turn of events. After having languished with inactivity, illness, and impatient boredom for more than four weeks, the Ohioan had just gotten himself a job with the U.S. Boundary Commission and passage to San Francisco on the steamer Two Friends, *scheduled to sail within days. That didn't happen exactly as planned, but the pace of travel plans and prospects accelerated with the May 5 arrival of the steamer* Oregon, *twenty-three days out of San Francisco and carrying first-hand news of the gold fields and even more interesting to Effinger, news of business prospects in supplying the miners. By May 15, Effinger was still in Panama, but he had maintained excitement about completing the last leg of the journey to California. Colonel Weller and his senior staff were to sail on the* Panama; *Effinger and others on the* Oregon *in five to ten days.*

ANNOTATIONS

Segar: Quaint though it may appear, "segar" is an accepted spelling for "cigar."

California: The brand-new *California* was launched in New York and cleared the harbor just two months before public announcement of gold discovery in California. By the time she reached Panama on January 17, 1849, there was a crowd awaiting passage to San Francisco, where she arrived on February 28, 1849, the first steamship to do so.[34] The rumors Effinger reported in Panama were true. Designed as a cargo and mail ship—not for passengers—the *California* made her first trip from Panama to San Francisco filled to the gills with people, undersupplied with coal and food, and beset by labor problems. Once in port, all of the crew but the captain and one other man deserted for the gold fields; consequently, the ship was delayed until mid-April in beginning the return to Panama due to Captain Cleveland Forbes's difficulty in securing a new crew.[35]

May 7th, 1849
Panama, New Granada

Dear Brother,
By the time this letter reaches you, you will be of the opinion if you have received my former letters that I am half way to San Francisco. My last letter informed you of my appointment by Colonel Weller to take charge of the stores belonging to the U.S. Commission and of my departure on board of the brig *Two Friends*. On the 20th of April I went on board the *Two Friends* and that evening we set sail for Taboga, an island some ten miles from this port and the place where all vessels receive water for their voyages. Colonel Weller had procured for me a cabin ticket having had to pay for it $350, so that I was as comfortably situated as any passenger on board of the vessel.

I had just recovered from a second attack of sickness and my appointment was so sudden that I had no opportunity of judging whether it was to my advantage to accept or reject it, having only two hours time for reflection and for the preparation of my departure. To a man in health it was certainly an excellent appointment, but my whole system had been completely prostrated and enervated by two successive attacks of fever and with me it was a matter of serious consideration whether I would not be periling my life by taking this voyage. But by the advice of Dr. Chamberlin I went on board, and we set sail for Taboga. I can hardly describe to you the appearance that this vessel presented when I came on board. She contained in her cabins and steerage 167 passengers. Never in my life have I seen cattle as densely packed on a railroad car or steamboat. The bulwarks, the rigging, the decks, the mid-ship, every place was crowded. Why, just imagine a small vessel constructed to carry from three to six passengers crowded with 167 and you may form some idea of her condition. The cabin was a tight, close little hole between decks with three staterooms, to sleep in any one of which would have been sure suffocation. The captain very kindly offered me his own hammock, which I accepted and although I would have given all my interest in California to have been ashore and out of the scrape, I concluded to go. On the evening of the 20th we arrived at Taboga and the next day commenced filling the water casks.

Right here I must give you a short description of the Island of Taboga, as it is in some respects the most beautiful and interesting spot I ever saw. This island is about twenty miles in circumference and has evidently been thrown up by some volcanic eruptions. It is the place where most of the fruits are raised which furnish the market of Panama. It is covered with groves of oranges and pineapples, patches of bananas, plantains, and yamas, and in fine with nearly all the tropical fruits. In the center of the island a beautiful brook comes leaping down a ravine, and it is from this stream that vessels receive their water. It is considered the finest watering place on the Pacific Coast.

"I believe that all who are now going to California will . . . be compelled to lead a dog's life for several years to come."

When they commenced bringing the water casks on board, I ascertained in conversations with some of the passengers that casks were purchased from the whale ship ***Niantic*** and had been used for years to contain sperm oil. When some of the casks were brought on board I got the steward to draw some water and tasted it, the smell of it was enough to make a dog sick, to drink it came nearly to "wiping me out." Shortly after I had drunk some of this water—and I had simply tasted it—I was seized with violent vomiting which was immediately followed by a severe attack of diarrhea. This in my weak and prostrated condition would have killed me in less than twelve hours had I not have exercised a will and determination, which I never before knew that I possessed. I immediately sent ashore (we were anchored about 250 yards from the beach) and hired a *bungo* (which is an odd kind of canoe), threw my baggage into it, and then crawled into it myself. I was so weak that I could scarcely sit up, but I directed the men to row as for their lives and I would reward them at Panama.

I started from the vessel at twelve o'clock p.m. when the sun shines the hottest and the wind blows the hardest. The wind came from the land and was direct in our teeth. After we got about two miles at sea, the wind blew so hard that the natives concluded to return to Taboga and wait until the wind lulled, but by threats and offer of greater price I succeeded in persuading them to continue on to Panama, at which place I arrived at ten o'clock in the evening having been for six hours exposed to the scorching rays of the sun and for four hours to the dews and fogs. The ocean was at low tide and we were therefore compelled to stop about a mile from Panama, so I hired a native to carry me to shore on his back. Before I got to the beach I was wet up to my waist in water, and when I at last arrived at my old quarters I fell down completely exhausted with fatigue and hunger. Never in my life did I subject myself to such hardships and exposure and never was my constitution in such a miserable condition to endure it.

But as has often been the case this very exposure which had it occurred whilst in health would very probably have produced my death just seemed to reanimate me and from that time I have gradually grown better and stronger and have now the satisfaction of informing you that I am once more as "stout as a little bull." The next morning I called on Colonel Weller and he sent Captain Richmond in my place. I was then offered a situation in Colonel Weller's Commission as the Computer in Major Emory's department but declined and for this reason: when the Commission reaches San Diego, Major Emory will be detained some four or five months taking astronomical observations while the rest of the party will be scouring the country seeking adventure and gold. My salary would have been six hundred dollars the first year, and one thousand dollars the second year. But I did not feel like binding myself to Major Emory's division when I saw there was a probability of being connected with headquarters. I then purchased a ticket on board of the *Humboldt*, the only respected vessel at that time in this port, but finding that they were going to crowd four hundred passengers on board of her, I sold my ticket, which cost me $235, for $375.

On the third of May, Colonel Weller again informed me that he would be glad to have me count myself with his Commission, that if I would join him he would assign me no post just now but that if after our arrival at San Diego I did not choose to take the position he would assign me, I was free to continue on my way to California. This position gave me this advantage: an opportunity of getting off with the U. S. Commission on the first steamer that arrived at this port free of expense—a comfortable room and the best boarding that the city of Panama afforded while here. And I assure you I did not hesitate long before I accepted his proposition on the morning of the fifth of May (my appointment was made on the third of May). I moved my quarters to Colonel Weller's and became fairly initiated into the Commission. On the evening of the fifth the steamer *Oregon* arrived and then for the first time I knew I had made a double ten strike.

Now see how my case stands and then judge ye of my wisdom or good luck. For forty days, I remained on this Isthmus waiting an opportunity to go to California. By chance I procured a ticket on the first vessel that left this port but deserted her to save my life. I then procured a ticket, cabin passage on the *Humboldt*, a fine Bremen packet but sold it for a similar reason. I then received a position in the U.S. Commission and on next Sunday (the thirteenth of May) in company with Colonel John B. Weller and his party. I take passage in the *Oregon* for California free of all expense and, if I choose, at a very handsome salary remain with the Commission along the Gila River. What I shall do will depend on circumstances. If, as has been represented, the country along the Gila River abounds in gold, I will continue with the Commission. If not, I go to San Francisco.

The last news that we have received from California not only authentically corroborates the wonderful intelligence, which we have already received from that country, but adds new facts that are calculated to inspire ardor in the minds of those who heretofore have felt no interest in this subject. I have seen and talked with men who left the gold mines of California forty days ago. I have examined the specimens of gold they bring with them, and my own opinion of the state of things there as drawn from these conversations is about this: I believe that all who are now going to California will if they remain there be compelled to lead a dog's life for several years to come. The grand pursuit of everybody will be digging for gold. Whatever inducements may be held out to capitalists and speculators to engage in some business that may result to their own profit and the comforts of those engaged in mining, the inducement that by being personally present in the mines they may perchance pick up the gold in lumps and pounds will at first be greater, so that all will be consumers and none producers. I believe that a man whose constitution has been hardened by labor provided he has health and "luck" and exercises due economy can amass what in our state we consider a very handsome fortune in the course of one season. Gold hunting will be something like our fishing excursions in the big reservoir: while some are taking in a fine perch, some will make a **water-haul** while others catch a **gudgeon**.

You may be surprised at my singular good fortune by receiving so many gratuitous favors at the hand of Colonel Weller, a gentleman that I never knew except on this expedition and against whom my first impressions were so unfavorable. I can only say that it will not do to **satisfy your curiosity** upon this subject just at this time.

The rainy season has at last commenced. It don't rain here: the clouds seem to spring a leak and the water comes pouring down in torrents. For the last month there has been a great deal of sickness on the Isthmus. I don't believe that out of the three thousand Americans one out of ten has escaped some kind of sickness. Many Americans have died. I visited the burying ground a few days since and was really startled at the number of graves. The old Spanish cemetery is an odd-looking place. A wall about nine feet thick encloses a square piece of ground. They stick their dead in holes formed in this wall as in a vault. When a fellow has lain there long enough for his carcass to rot, they open the hole again and take out his bones to give room for some new victim. The consequence is that the enclosure is filled with all kind of human bones, skulls etc. which are kicked and knocked about with as much want of respect as we would pay to the bones of a horse. The natives always throw away all the clothing, the bed and bedding and everything in any way connected with the deceased person. The Americans, however, have chosen their own burying ground and as far as in them lies [the possibility], give their friends a decent burial. Last night W. H. Legg, a printer of Columbus and who at the instance of Mr. Rankin joined our company at Cincinnati, died from fear, yes absolute fear. About five days ago he had a simple attack of diarrhea and at the very first became very much alarmed. His fear continued until last night when he expired at my old quarters. This is the first case I ever witnessed of death being produced by fright, although I have heard of the like before. This evening we bury him. Dr. Chamberlin pronounces his disease acute dysentery.

The *dreaded cholera* has at last made its appearance in this place. Several of the natives have already fallen victim, and what its ravages may be the future must determine. It is natural that you should want to know how I feel surrounded as I am with diseases of all kind in these infernal regions situated way down here thousands of miles from home and friends. Well to be candid with you I feel very well and perfectly easy under the circumstances but I do really *think* I was a great fool and ass ever to leave the comfortable position I had at home for an expedition that can never repay me, let it be ever so profitable, for the comforts I have left and the hardships and suffering I have endured. But for fear that I should again become restless and have a disposition to roam abroad I am determined to see the thing through. I intended that this trip should be a lesson to me. It has already taught me more than I would have learned at home in the quarter of a century, but hereafter I shall be contented to learn *without learning so fast.*

Tell sister Mary to write to me, and I shall also expect a letter from Mich and Elmyra. Tell Mother that notwithstanding my hardships, I feel as funny as usual. One time I gave up in despair and intended returning home, but I didn't like to go back without having seen the "Elephant." I believe were it not for obstinacy and shame, two-thirds who have taken this route would return. But Uncle Sam is paying my way now and feeding me at the same time, and I therefore feel a *leetle* more at ease.

Give my love to all—write to me often and fully.

Your Affectionate brother
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

Niantic: A Connecticut whaler built in 1833, the *Niantic* arrived in San Francisco from Panama in July of 1849, was abandoned by her crew, and recycled as a store ship on shore until she was burned in the great fire of May 1851. Remains of the ship including cases of French champagne and other precious cargo were uncovered in 1977 during excavation and construction for a new building. Portions of the hull and many artifacts were salvaged, and are now preserved and interpreted at the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.[36]

Water-haul: In a water-haul, the net is drawn in empty of fish; it is a fruitless effort. A ***gudgeon*** is a small fresh-water fish related to the carp and used as bait.

Satisfy your curiosity: Boasting to his family and reassuring the folks at home about his good fortune to have become so favorably connected to Colonel Weller and his federally sponsored commission, Effinger's cryptic pronouncement ("I can only say that it will not do to satisfy your curiosity upon this subject just at this time") hints of a growing friendship with Weller, to whom he lent money once in California and apparently sympathized with during political discord in the coming months. The significance of Effinger's statement, and his change of heart about Weller, is yet to be discovered.

San Diego

August 1st 1849
Camp Riley near San Diego

Dear Brother Mike,
Since my arrival at San Diego my time has been so much employed seeking adventure and fun that I have scarcely allowed myself a spare moment either for recreation or writing. My letter home immediately after my arrival here was written in such haste that I have no other recollections about it except that I wrote it. You must excuse me therefore if I happen occasionally to give you a duplicate of that same event.

On the third of July the long looked-for Mexican Commissioner arrived, **General Garcia Conde**. The Commissioner is a fine-looking man, one of the rare ones that you but seldom meet with among Mexicans. In personal appearance he resembles Tom Corwin, but in dignity and grace I do not know his equal. The four gentlemen who accompany him composing his civil list are not only intelligent but very genteel fellows, far ahead in all the refined rules of etiquette and politeness to the rough-looking specimens of American character composing the civil department of Colonel Weller's party. Accompanying General Conde are about 250 Mexican soldiers, the greasiest, dirtiest looking set of men that I have ever seen. The officers are very little better than the men. In their own country they are not permitted to go into good society and General Conde is determined that this well-established rule shall not be departed from here.

Weeks beforehand we had commenced our preparation for the celebration of Independence Day, and a more magnificent affair I never witnessed. After General Conde had been escorted into town we had a grand military parade. We then formed into a procession led by a company of dragoons, then Colonel Weller as orator of the day, and Major Emory as president, then ladies and gentlemen, then the Yuma Indians with their squaws, while a company of Infantry brought up the rear. After listening to a very appropriate and eloquent oration from Colonel Weller and the reading of the Declaration of Independence in English and Spanish, we marched to barbecue, which we had exclusively prepared for the Indians. We had an ox and six sheep roasted whole and three barrels of whiskey, and the way the Indians waded into the affection and virtues of each would have been a sight for an English epicurean. The whole affair was a novelty to the people out here and for the first time in their lives many a poor Indian and native Californian got his belly full of beef and whisky. Some of the Indians got so drunk that they have scarcely got over it yet, and the way they tore up the ground by the roots was a sin to Moses. In the evening we had an excellent supper and dance (*baile*) at **Bandini's**. I certainly think it was the most appropriate and joyous celebration of the fourth that I have ever witnessed, and you may judge of the magnificence of our arrangements when I tell you that the evening supper and dance cost us $500.

There was an incident occurred at the dance which I must not omit telling you. Señor Don F. Jesus Iturbide, son of the ex-emperor Iturbide, accompanies General Conde as interpreter and in the course of the dance got most gloriously confusticated—and who didn't? Young Iturbide is a handsome-looking fellow and only resembles a Mexican in action. He became perfectly mad in liquor and was boasting in the most grandiloquent style that he was the son of the ex-emperor of Mexico and that he could whip a half-dozen of Americans. Well I happened to be of a different opinion as to the latter part of his boast and was about illustrating my opinion by giving him the *knock down* argument on the subject. You may well imagine what a terrible excitement this little scene produced at our crowded *baile*: Old General Conde rushed in and took young Iturbide by the throat, and I thought that he would have choked the gullet out of him. Some half-dozen of the young men connected with our party toted the young gentleman down to our camp and put him to bed to sleep off the effects of California wine and the night's excitement. Towards morning I escorted General Conde and his son to bed in consequence of their becoming "tired" under the effects of *liquids* that they drink out here mixed with a *leetle* water.

The greatest sport in this country is dancing. All the California women waltz beautifully. Our *bailes* chiefly consist in Spanish dances and polkas; a few quadrilles and country-dances are generally introduced for the benefit of those who cannot waltz. They commence dancing here at about ten o'clock in the evening and keep it up until broad daylight in the morning.

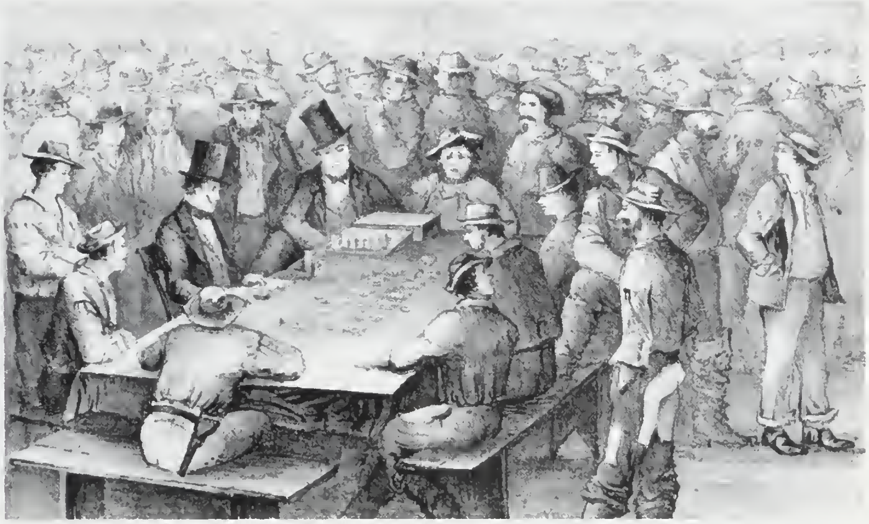
As you will perceive from the heading of my letter I have changed quarters from San Diego to **Camp Riley**. At my own instance Colonel Weller detailed me to attach myself to Major Emory's party and for the present I have one of the prettiest and best berths in the Commission, acting as assistant computer and commissary to Major Emory's division. In about a fortnight I expect to start with **Captain Hardcastle** and a detachment from the 2nd Dragoons on an exploring expedition to find the highest peak on some of the high mountains about here for astronomical purposes. Camp Riley is situated at the foot of San Diego harbor about fifteen miles south of San Diego. The boundary line between Mexico and Upper California will commence one marine league south of our camp.

Most of the surveying party are now encamped within a quarter of mile of us and expect to commence operations in a few days. From this you will see that instead of digging gold in the rich placers of Upper California, I am working for Uncle Sam among the barren mountains that skirt the Pacific—how more justly I might remark that instead of suffering and starving and dying with disease seeking for gold in the placers of the North I am now contentedly and comfortably enjoying an expedition in a strange and marvelous country—an expedition which not only gives me pleasure but makes me feel handy and vigorous and for which I am well fed and well paid! We have means of hearing from the gold mines about once a week and let me assure you that the recent news from the placers is a very good antidote to the gold fever. There is no question as to the *abundance* of the gold—but the facility of obtaining it—that is the rub. Men who have been accustomed to hard labor all their lives are broken down with fatigue in working the mines. Add to this the exorbitant price which everything commands at the mines and there is not much inducement for a man who don't even like to weed a garden to go there. A *professional* man might make something at San Francisco, such a one as follows the profession of opening a coffeehouse and keeping a little back room where money is deposited for safe keeping on roulette tables, **chuckle lucks**, and in monte banks. There is every encouragement for this class of professional gentlemen to emigrate to California, and I must commend the good judgment of this class of men in the foresight they have exhibited in choosing California as the field for their future operations. The only reason why one-half of the emigrants don't turn back is because they are out of funds and the other half keep moving on out of false pride.

I shall however make this remark that I am now within forty-eight hours' ride of San Francisco, have every opportunity of obtaining correct information from that country and when I am fully convinced that I can make money by going there without sacrifice to health I shall be off; otherwise I

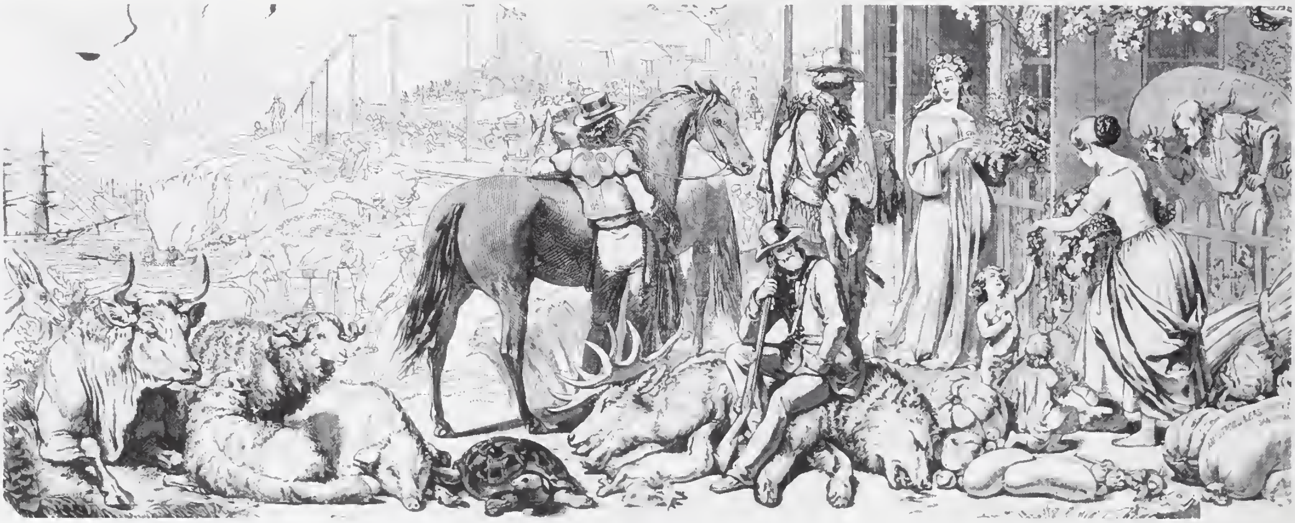
"I . . .
have examined
the Elephant . . .
to my entire
satisfaction,
and if you ever
afterwards
hear me
express a
desire to leave
the comforts
and luxuries
of a home
and civilized
society for an
expedition to
the Far West . . .
immediately
encase me
in a
straitjacket . . ."

shall remain with this Commission until I return home. I left home with about six hundred dollars. My stay on the Isthmus of Panama cost me three hundred dollars. If I remain with the Commission until next January I can return home with $1,600. By that time I think I shall have examined the Elephant (for I have seen the animal already) to my entire satisfaction, and if you ever afterwards hear me express a desire to leave the comforts and luxuries of a home and civilized society for an expedition to the Far West or any other Far Off place, why immediately encase me in a strait-jacket, as a person in that state of mind with my present experience should be considered as a dangerous character. I think Mr. Hunter exhibited his usual good sense when he advised his son Edward to the following plan in order to test the beauty and pleasure of a trip to California. He told him to take his blanket and pick axe and go down into the **Kettle hills**, work hard all day by picking among the rocks, subsist on what food he could find in that wild and desolate region of country, sleep out all night on the damp ground, and he would then have a foretaste of the pleasures of a California trip. If any of my Lancaster friends are still indisposed with the gold fever I would recommend a little of this kind of practice as it will be of immense service to them on the way, and in order to make their practice more useful I would suggest that they would choose as the ground of their operations some low flat where drinking water would be brackish and where mosquitoes, sand flies, and myriads of fleas could keep up a healthful circulation. If they get the fever and ague and the diarrhea and some of their companions die off, why, so much the better; they should be completely hardened for all these things. My own opinion is that if they should follow this prescription for one or two weeks they would come to Bill Latta's philosophical conclusion and defer their visit until a railroad was constructed.



When Effinger reached California, he set to work for the Boundary Commission in San Diego rather than seeking gold. "Men who have been accustomed to hard labor all their lives are broken down with fatigue in working the mines." Few made their fortunes except for "such a one as follows the profession of opening a coffeehouse and keeping a little back room where money is deposited for safe keeping on roulette tables, chuckle lucks, and in monte banks." "Gambling in the Mines," California Historical Society, FN-35933.

I have now been in California since the tenth of June and during that time have had every opportunity to examine this part of the country. I have traveled and looked in vain to find the Fairy Lands that bookmakers and penny scribblers have described in this country. This part of California seems to be made up of barren hills and *sierra* (saw-backed) mountains. Occasionally you meet with a beautiful valley, but in consequence of the long drought nothing but grass will grow unless you irrigate the soil, and this it would be impossible to do as during the months of June, July, August, and September the creeks dry up also. It would be a novel spectacle in Ohio to see a farmer watering his cornfields, wheat, oats, and barley and yet this is the way grain is produced here—not one drop of rain falls here from the first of April until sometime in December, from which I have no doubt originated the expression "a long dry spell." Not a tree or semblance of tree grows within eighteen miles of San Diego. Why, this country looks as odd to a man raised in Ohio as a race of people who were naturally bald heads. But still a great many good things can be said of this part of California. It is certainly the finest climate in the world. The thermometer ranges from 65 to 80 degrees. The atmosphere is so clear that it is almost incredible the distance you can see and hear. You very easily distinguish mountains a hundred miles off. The other evening we sent our bugler to a mountain about as far off as **Mount Pleasant** is from the courthouse and we could hear every note on his bugle as distinctly as if he had been within 100 yards of us. You can't spoil beef or fresh meat of any kind if you expose it to the air. It may



Effinger did not believe claims about California's potential agricultural bounty. "I have traveled and looked in vain to find the Fairy Lands that bookmakers and penny scribblers have described in this country. . . . California . . . never can to any extent be an agricultural country. When you add together the elements of which this country is formed, the great chain of barren mountains, the millions of acres of sandy desert, the continued drought, the scarcity of water when water is most needed, I think you will agree with me that by comparison the old Hocking Valley is a highly cultivated garden and California a wild waste." "Resources of California and their Development," California Historical Society, FN-35956.

dry up like an Egyptian mummy but it will never spoil. People live to a remarkable age. I know women here who are great-grand-mothers and yet look younger than Mrs. Dougherty—yet by this I would not wish to intimate that Mrs. D. is getting old or that she could become a great-grandmother by emigrating to California.

A rancho or *farm* in California generally embraces a tract of country about as large as the county of Fairfield. On this immense tract of land a farmer raises about one hundred bushels of wheat, one hundred bushels of corn, a few onions, and pumpkins. About **Pueblo de los Angeles** they raise vineyards and make very excellent wine. I have also seen a few pears and peaches, and with these exceptions the only products of the country are cattle and horses. Every ranchero owns from five to fifteen thousand head of cattle and from one to six hundred head of horses, and great cattle and great horses they are, I can tell you. The only food a Californian cares for is beef and milk. With the exception of the short space devoted to this repast, and sleep, the rest of his time is spent on horseback. To see a Californian ride, you think he was a part of his horse. Whether the horse trots or lopes, gallops, or runs, he keeps the same immovable position—he never jolts. They generally, however, ride their horses in a fast gallop. To be an excellent rider and handle the lasso skillfully are their two greatest and in fact most useful accomplishments. I have read many wonderful accounts of their skill in throwing the lariat, but I have already seen more than I ever read or credited. It is no uncommon sight to see a boy fifteen years old mount a fiery horse and under full run fling his lasso over the neck of a steer and by a sudden turn of his horse throw Mr. Steer completely on his back. This thing however is all a matter of practice, and they commence it from their earliest childhood. The children and boys here instead of playing "Bull in the Pen" or "Black-man" or "Town Ball" have a game they call "Lasso" and the only point I can see in the game is their lassoing one another.

Effinger celebrates having gotten away from Panama before the cholera epidemic developed widely. Even so, he heard that a number of people on the next ship out succumbed while at sea. Counting his blessings, and enjoying the California lifestyle, Effinger describes being in the saddle for many hours, galloping up to thirty miles per day on a strong California horse while performing his duties as commissary to the Commission.

Your Affectionate Brother
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

General Garcia Conde: At the head of the Mexican Boundary Commission was General Pedro García Conde, a respected engineer and officer with broad political experience including the military command of Chihuahua. José Salazar Ylarrequi, his assistant, acted as surveyor, and also in their party were several engineers, the equivalent of U.S. Topographical Corps, and Felipe de Iturbide, son of the former emperor, who served the commission as translator and interpreter. They arrived in San Diego on the frigate *Caroline* on July 3, a month after they were expected. Despite the late start, the Mexican commission was thoroughly professional and, as it turned out, more stable and free of the political jockeying that plagued the U.S. Commission.[37]

Bandini: The Commission's Fourth of July celebration was held at the Casa de Bandini, which is still standing at 2660 Calhoun Street in Old Town, San Diego. Like the nearby Casa de Estudillo, also on the plaza, the house was built in the late 1820s by Juan Bandini, son-in-law of José María Estudillo. By the time of the boundary survey, the Casa de Bandini had already served as an organization point for official Americans; in 1846 Bandini had offered his home to Commodore Robert Field Stockton for his headquarters.[38]

Camp Riley was established at the southern end of San Diego Bay as an encampment for the Boundary Commission and was commanded by Major Samuel P. Heintzelman. Brigadier General Bennet Riley (1787–1853) had distinguished himself in the Mexican-American War and transferred to California at its end. He had served as the commander of the Pacific Division and therefore became the military governor of California. He convened the constitutional convention and called for the first gubernatorial election.[39]

Edmund L.F. Hardcastle graduated from West Point in 1846 and immediately entered the Corps of Topographical Engineers. Active in numerous campaigns during the Mexican-American War, he was assigned as an assistant to Major William H. Emory, the chief astronomer of the survey party attached to the U.S. Boundary Commission. Emory's other assistant was Lieutenant Amiel Weeks Whipple, an 1841 graduate of West Point and topographical engineer who had worked with Emory on the Northeastern Boundary Survey, determining the Canada-U.S. border.[40] Andrew Belcher Gray (1820–1862), son of the British consul in Norfolk, Virginia, began surveying as a teenager. As a civilian, he surveyed the U.S.-Texas boundary and upper Michigan before being appointed principal surveyor of the Boundary Commission. Among many problems that the Commission faced were the disagreements between Gray and Weller; between Gray and John Russell Bartlett, who succeeded Weller; and generally between the civilian Gray and the army engineers. Later, Gray served as chief engineer in the infantry for the Confederate Army; he was killed at Fort Pillow, Tennessee.[41]

Effinger's contribution to the U.S. Boundary Commission was wrapped up with these officers. By terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, a border was to be surveyed by joint commissions from Mexico and the United States, whose fieldwork would be decisive. At the western end of the border, they were to survey a line from the confluence of the Gila and Colorado Rivers to a point on the Pacific coast one maritime league south of the southernmost point of the port of San Diego. Emory and Gray surveyed the port and coast to determine the westernmost terminus of the boundary; Whipple was responsible for charting the point where the Gila met the Colorado; and Hardcastle was to study the topography between the two points established on the river and the sea as preparation for drawing the actual longitudinal line. To do that, the engineers employed a process of gunpowder flashes at timed intervals, in which Effinger participated, and described to his family at home far away in Ohio.

Chuckle luck: The *Oxford English Dictionary* says that "Chuck-a-luck," "chuck-luck," and "chuckle luck" are American usage, all describing a gambling game played with dice. Monte is "a gambling game similar to faro, played with a pack of forty-five (sometimes forty) cards . . . chiefly in Spain, Spanish-speaking countries, and Spanish-influenced areas of the western United States."

The Kettle hills, "so called, a romantic place, two miles south of the Court House, is not, perhaps, equalled [sic] or surpassed in Ohio for wildness and beauty of scenery. It is a dip down of about one hundred feet, forming an area of nearly level land at the bottom of about two acres, which is thickly set with forest trees and underbrush. Then precipitous and nearly perpendicular sand rocks stand up on all sides, surmounted with pines and cedar, and other growth of timber, which, frowning down into the depths, give it rather a gloomy appearance. The usual place of descent is at the north-east corner, and down through a cleft in the rock by means of projecting points, and by grasping the bushes and roots of trees that grow out from the fissures of the rocks. At the north side of the basin there are projecting rocks, forming beneath dark cavernous recesses quite away from the world above, with all its noise and clamor. It is a lonely, gloomy spot to visit; but to the lover of nature's wild freaks, one well worth visiting."[42]

Mount Pleasant: "This sandstone rock, used by the American Indians and settlers as an observation point and fortress, is 250 feet high and has 2 acres of flat top area. Located in Rising Park, the rock offers a panoramic view of the surrounding country."[43] Mount Pleasant is slightly less than a mile from the Lancaster court house.

Pueblo de los Angeles: Far ahead of later newcomers to California, Effinger was aware that the first commercial wine industry in California was in Los Angeles, not the more famous grape-growing and winemaking regions in Napa, Sonoma, and other counties to the north.

August 29th 1849, Upper California
Camp Riley near San Diego

Dear Brother John,
I have sometimes thought I would write no more letters home for the simple reason that after having written one, I change my conclusions respecting many matters I have told you about, and were I to attempt to reconcile these inconsistent statements, every succeeding letter would refute the changes contained in its illustrious predecessor. If you notice any inconsistencies of this kind, you must attribute them to the hasty manner in which one is sometimes compelled to form his notions of matters and things passing around him and the correction of which can only be made after more sober and deliberate reflection.

It would be utterly impossible for one to write an interesting letter from this section of country—that word forming no part of the character of the country. When you recollect that San Diego is a little mud town composed of about forty adobe houses . . . you will not be astonished to hear that it presents neither an imposing nor interesting appearance. . . . And if you further recollect that the country, which surrounds the aforesaid San Diego, is one chain of barren and uninteresting hills it will rather throw a damper upon any high, preconceived notions that you have heard heretofore entertained of the fertility and beauty of this country.

But you may well say, this may be a very fair account of the lower part of Upper California, but then there are the beautiful valleys and plains of the Sacramento and San Joaquin with all their tributaries filled with the shining and precious metals. As yet you know nothing about these. Within the last six weeks, however, I have seen and conversed with so many men of intelligence and observation who have not only visited every section of interest in Upper California but who have been residents in this country for the last two years, and they seem to be generally of the opinion that it never can to any extent be an agricultural country. And the reason for this is very obvious. It rains here but three months in the year. During the remaining nine months the soil is baked as hard as stone by a tropical sun. The only manner then left is by irrigating the soil, but this will be found impracticable as all the streams (except the main rivers) become as dry as a powder horn by the middle of June. When you add together, therefore, the elements of which this country is formed, the great chain of barren mountains, the millions of acres of sandy desert, the continued drought, the scarcity of water when water is most needed, I think you will agree with me that by comparison the old Hocking Valley is a highly cultivated garden and California a wild waste.

Yankee enterprise and Yankee ingenuity have not as yet, however, been directed to the development of the agricultural resources of this country, and I am reluctant to pronounce an opinion as to what they may do until I have witnessed the effect which a few years application of their wits may produce. This is no new country, the resources of which have been left untried. Ever since the year **1667** it has been occupied and I may say governed by a set of Catholic priests who have left the very best evidence to their ability to draw out the resources of the Country in the only monuments that are left to tell of their existence, the different

missions which they have constructed and the highly improved country in the vicinity of the missions. I have visited several of these missions and never in my life have I had more cause to wonder and admire the genius and indefatigable perseverance of any class of men. These missions are generally established at the head of some beautiful valley. They are constructed of adobe and are immense buildings having every convenience which art and civilization could suggest. Their old wine cellars, the chicken and pigeon houses, the bee hives, the gardens filled with pears, peaches, apricots, grapes, figs and delicious fruits of all kinds give evidence that they lived like old patriarchs, or to use a more modern expression, like fighting cocks. But how did these priests accomplish so much? First, by converting whole tribes of Indians to their religion and then making slaves of them to administer to their own uses and enjoyment. Hundreds of these savages were constantly employed about these missions without receiving one cent of compensation but urged on to industry by the awe inspired in them by their religious masters. No wonder they should accomplish so much when *labor*, which was well directed, was so easily obtained. But the larger churches connected with every mission give evidence that they had other resources at their command than the products of their highly cultivated gardens. For all they raised, they consumed. That they were possessed of great wealth is as evident as that they once lived here in luxury.

Often times in wandering about the large rooms of these old missions, as the echo of my steps reminded me of the solitude and desertion of a place once lively and boisterous with the mirth of pot-bellied-red-faced-jolly old priests, I have thought and asked myself the question, how did they accumulate their wealth? To me the answer is now very evident: I honestly believe they were early acquainted with the

Effinger visited missions in the San Diego area and wove fantasies about the Spanish priests who had earlier occupied California. "Often times in wandering about the large rooms of these old missions as the echo of my steps reminded me of the solitude and desertion of a place once lively and boisterous with the mirth of pot-bellied-red-faced-jolly old priests, I have thought and asked myself the question, how did they accumulate their wealth? To me the answer is now very evident: I honestly believe they were early acquainted with the mineral wealth of this country and by keeping the matter secret availed themselves of this resource to advance their interest and keep firm hold of the country." *Mission San Diego* by Carlton Watkins. California Historical Society; FN-35955 mineral wealth of this country and by keeping the matter secret availed themselves of this resource to advance their interest and keep firm hold of the country. As you are aware, sometime in the year 1836 [sic] the Mexican government became suspicious and jealous of the power and influence of these missions and at once and the same time stripped them of their old padres and wealth. These missions in their present dilapidated condition are the property of Uncle Sam. I must stop here or you may think I intend boring you with the history, rise, and progress of California.

> *"California never can to any extent be an agricultural country. And the reason for this is very obvious. It rains here but three months in the year. The only manner then left is by irrigating the soil, but this will be found impracticable . . . ."*

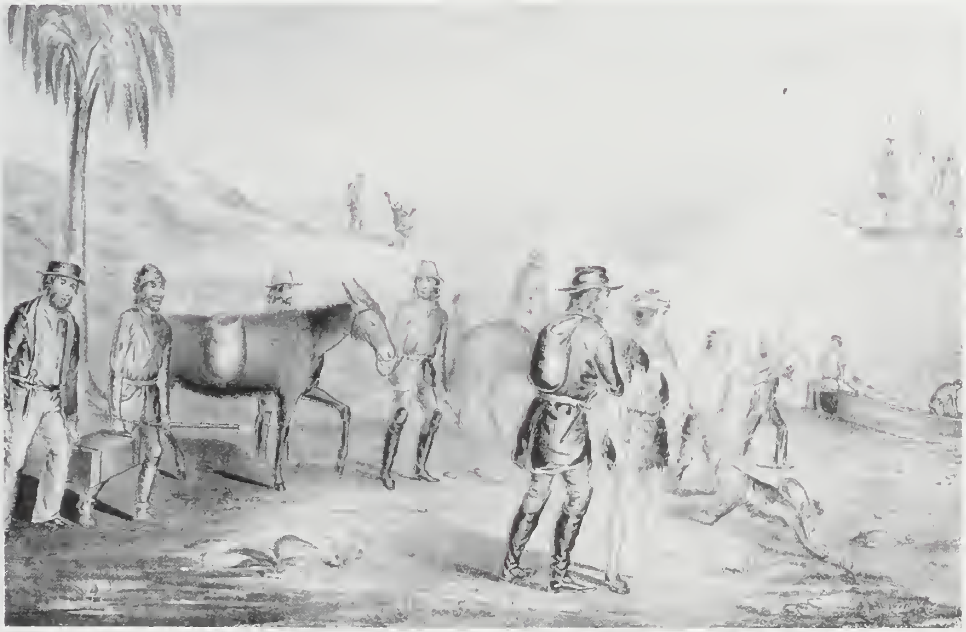
While in San Diego at Camp Riley, Effinger considered whether he should go to the mines at all. Speaking with forty-niners on their way back to the States, he found that very few individuals reaped significant rewards except for businessmen, speculators, and gamblers. Horrible hard work and health-busting labor yielded only small fortunes, which miners tended to blow off quickly in San Francisco's many venues for "gambling, licentiousness, and wickedness." Having no interest in such, Effinger planned to visit the mines and San Francisco only to deliver eyewitness accounts that folks at home would want to hear.

I must now relate to you the adventures, which poor **Tom Wilson** has had on the raging canawl [?]. In a letter written to you from Panama dated in April I informed you that I had taken passage for myself and Tom Wilson in the brig *Two Friends* and the reasons which induced me to leave her. On the 25th of April last, this vessel set sail for San Francisco. You will further recollect that in a subsequent letter written from this place I told you that we had passed said brig in the harbor of Acapulco. Well, sir, after leaving Acapulco she was tossed about by wave and adverse winds until they had consumed all their provisions and water and were compelled to fall in and consume all the government provision belonging to the U.S. Commission. She then put in at Cape San Lucas where she was again replenished with water and provisions and after blundering about for fifty days (most of which time her passengers were compelled to live on parched rice and a pint of water which they had to distill themselves). They ran her in to **Santo Domingo** about 200 miles below here when sixty of the passengers deserted the old brig and wandered up through Lower California, at which place they arrived on the 26th of August, and among this number was our old friend Tom Wilson. Now just imagine how these passengers looked, but especially Tom. After being tossed about on the old Pacific for nearly 120 days they were at last compelled to abandon her without any clothing except their wearing apparel and wander as best they could up a region of country as sterile and barren as the desert of Arabia. Of all looking people made after God's image these men took the boots. Why Tom, when I saw him at Acapulco, looked like a buffalo bull, and he had then only been at sea thirty days. When he arrived here he looked more like an old rickety sawmill that had been worn out fifty years ago but left standing.

I took the old fellow in my tent and after giving him a washing, a brushing, and a shirt, which latter article added much to his personal appearance, I gave him a good hearty breakfast and it really did my soul good to see the man eat. As a matter of course he neither had money, clothes, nor anything else. I therefore accompanied him to San Diego, procured him comfortable quarters, and gave him money enough to pay his passage to San Francisco on the next steamer which is now expected daily. Tom's health has not suffered from the voyage, but it has doubly hardened his constitution. I could have procured him a situation in the Commission at fifty dollars per month but it is my own advice to him to go on, for if anything can be made at the mines he is just the fellow that can make it.

Now a full history of Tom Wilson's adventures during his trip to California would be the history of at least two-thirds of those who have emigrated here. More than three thousand emigrants have passed through San Diego, some coming the southern route via the Gila River, others abandoning their ships and coasting it up through Mexico and Lower California. The heart at first sickens at hearing a recital of their distress and suffering but finally grows cold and callous at its frequent occurrence and repetition. I have known men absolutely abandon a comrade whose brain was crazed with typhoid fever and for want of assistance he has died like a dog in the road. I have known cases where persons wearied out by hunger and fatigue have been deserted by their companions and would ask in vain of those who were passing by for a drink of water and morsel of food. Take them as a class and a more selfish, mean cowardly set of scamps never emigrated to a country. It is under such circumstances as these that the goodness of a man's heart can be tested, and it was amid this distress and suffering that the noble qualities of Tom Wilson's heart were tested. Every one of his companions speak of him with kindness and gratitude. In the midst of their greatest difficulties and distress, Tom always lent a willing heart and hand, in fact, he seemed to think of every body else but himself, and in his acts of charity and kindness earned the well deserved title of "the best fellow on ship board." It has been my singular good fortune always to have it in my power to relieve him whenever he got into a tight place, and I really feel as much pleasure in granting him a favor as he can in receiving it.

Your Affectionate Brother
R. P. Effinger



Not all of the "Lancaster Boys" who left Ohio with Effinger landed on their feet. "After being tossed about [aboard the brig *Two Friends*] on the old Pacific for nearly 120 days they were at last compelled to abandon her without any clothing except their wearing apparel and wander as best they could up a region of country as sterile and barren as the desert of Arabia. Of all people made after God's image, these men took the boots. Why Tom Wilson, when I saw him at Acapulco, looked like a buffalo bull, . . . when he arrived here he looked more like an old rickety sawmill that had been worn out fifty years ago but left standing." "From the Place We hear About," California Historical Society, FN-35935

ANNOTATIONS

1667: Effinger's chronology was in error by 102 years, as Spanish permanent settlement of upper California—including Franciscan missions—did not take place till 1769. Perhaps his understanding made reference to Baja California, which the Spanish visited numerous times beginning in the 1520s and where Jesuit missions were founded beginning in 1697.

Missions: Unabashed praise for the productivity of the missions mixed with condemnation of the missionaries for their Catholicism as well as for their "enslavement" of Indians result in Effinger's ambivalent but not uncommon assessment of California's heritage before the Gold Rush. The myth persisted that hordes of gold had been hidden by Franciscan missionaries, who had been sent out of the province through secularization of all twenty-one missions between 1834 and 1844.

Tom Wilson: See page 18. Tom Wilson, one of the "Lancaster Boys," must have been a favorite of Effinger's or of someone in his family. The writer's compassion for the unlucky Mr. Wilson is demonstrated in repeated references throughout the Effinger letters. Sam McNeil (see pages 11 above and 49 below) also saw Tom Wilson in San Diego, on his way home. Hearing his difficult story, asked if he need help, but Wilson refused assistance.[44]

Santo Domingo, on Magdalena Bay in present Baja California Sur, was the second Dominican mission to be founded (in 1775). It was abandoned in 1839.

October 3rd 1849
Camp Riley near San Diego

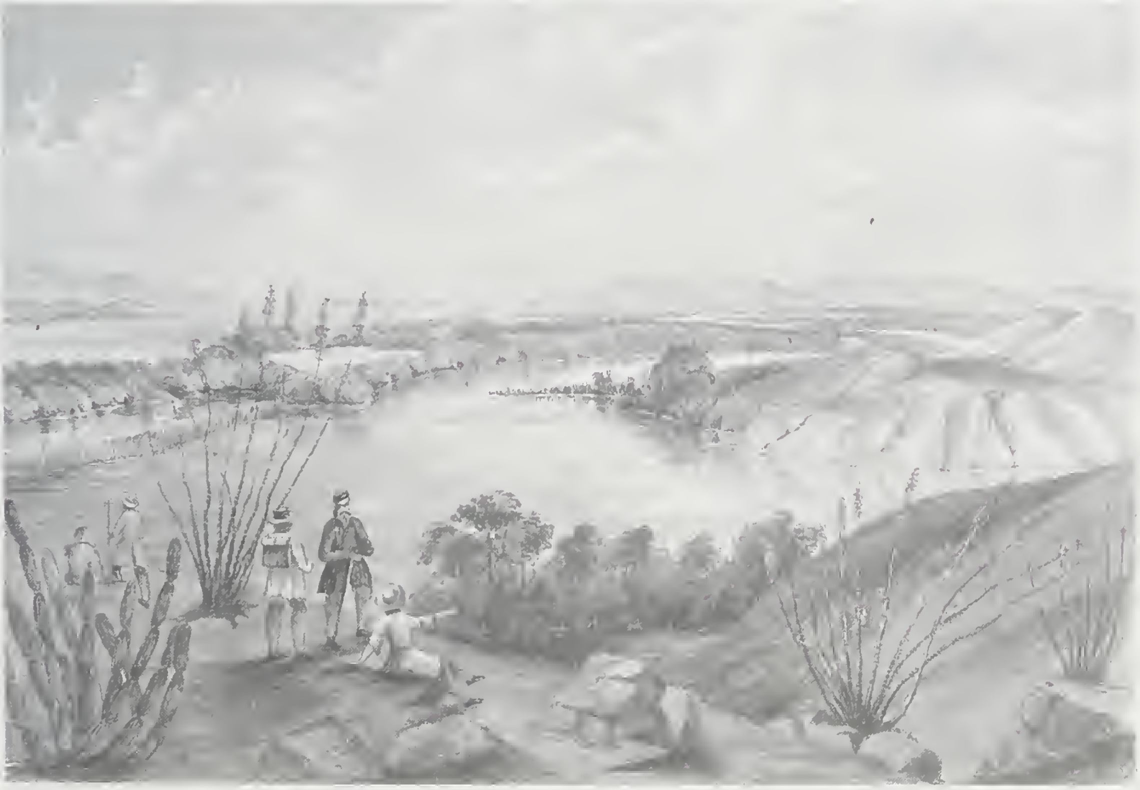
My Dear Mother,
I have just returned from the mountains, having been absent with Captain Hardcastle on a singular kind of expedition. Major Emory proposes to determine the longitude of the mouth of the Gila by a succession of flashes. For this purpose, Lieutenant Whipple has been sent to the Gila, Lieutenant Slaughter to Point Wickapoo, Captain Hardcastle to Los Pinos and I will be stationed at Cerro Colorado while Major Emory will remain at his observatory. In this manner we will establish a line so that at a certain hour in the evening a rocket sent up by Lieutenant Whipple will be seen by Lieutenant Slaughter who will then send up a rocket which will be seen by Captain Hardcastle which will be communicated to me by rockets and flashes sent up at Hardcastle's station and which I will communicate to Major Emory by sending up rockets and flashes from my station. I shall be occupied on this duty from the 5th to the 10th of this month. The region of country all along this line is alive with Indians and when we commence our pyrotechnics exhibition will make them think an earthquake's brewing or hell is broke loose. It will certainly frighten the life out of some of them. A more miserable race of beings never polluted God's creation than the Indians of this country. They are too lazy to work, too cowardly to fight! but simply have enough cunning to steal what will barely sustain them. They are of no more account than the coyotes (wolves) that infest this mystic land, and do nothing but steal a sheep occasionally.

I have been singularly fortunate since my advent to this country, I really believe that I am the only person in the Commission who has made any money and I know there is not a pleasanter position than the one in which I am placed. I have now at my command a good California horse and two mules and am at least ten hours out of the twenty-four on horseback. I have by this means been enabled to explore the whole country around San Diego, and one of the principal reasons which has detained me here is this: I confidently believe that gold mines will be discovered in this part of California and that too in the neighborhood of our mountain expedition. I shall determine this matter in a few days as I shall be prepared with men and means to make all the explorations necessary to ascertain whether gold exists in this part of California—or not.

Of one thing you may be sure that this far I have made more money than any one who left Lancaster with me, and I don't intend to permit anybody to get ahead of me. God knows I am heartily tired of this country and my present mode of living and would be much more happy had I have remained at home, but as I, like a thousand other fools, have cast my lot in this foolish expedition, I do not intend that it shall pull up a water-haul.

Riley's narrative (although half of it false) of his sufferings in Arabia will hardly compare with the sufferings and privations that many have been compelled to endure coming up this coast. Many vessels that left Panama long before I did are still beating along the coast of Lower California. The consequences are that living at sea for so long a time they run out of water and provisions, and the passengers, being nearly famished and starved for water and food, run the vessel ashore and commence their march up the barren and sterile coast of Lower California. By the time they reach this place they are the most miserable and horrible set of beings that I ever witnessed, and it is heart sickening to listen to their tales of suffering and privation. More than six hundred men have either been wrecked or compelled to abandon their vessels within the last two months between this port and Cape San Lucas. When you recollect that these poor devils have to wander from one hundred to 250 miles through a country sparsely inhabited, mountainous, rocky, and nearly totally devoid of any kind of vegetation or water, you may form some estimate of the difficulties which they have to encounter and the sufferings they are compelled to endure. Accounts are now reaching us from the emigrants who have taken the overland route, and many are really suffering more than it is possible for the mind to concern.

You see that when a person once starts upon this expedition he hasn't got it in his power to turn back. His only hope is to push ahead. You will not find one man out of a hundred but who would gladly



Effinger served as a civilian employee of the U.S Boundary Commission, which was charged with mapping and running the boundary between the United States and Mexico following the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. He took pride in his work assisting the astronomer and enjoyed his exertions, telling his brother: "today I have ridden more than 30 miles"—and then added, "I danced all last night." His boss John Weller was relieved by John Russell Bartlett, who captured the Southwest in watercolors as well as fixing the continental boundaries of the United States. "Junction of the Gila and Colorado Rivers," Bartlett #7. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

relinquish all his visionary prospects in the placers and return to his former avocation, even if it was on the chain gang, had he the power to do so. But by the time a man reaches Panama and pays his passage money in a vessel to San Francisco, his funds are all exhausted and if he is therefore cast ashore he must beg, steal or starve. I don't care how respectable, how well educated or how wealthy his friends may be, if he is cast ashore in this section of the country he is bound to classify himself with beggars and thieves or starve to death —and just think of it, if I had embarked in the *Two Friends*, this would have been precisely my condition. And what kind of a sight do you suppose I would have made coming up this country, dirty, ragged, unshaved, uncombed, unwashed, half-starved, barefooted, feet all swollen and lacerated, and yet many a poor fellow equally respectable and as well educated and well bred as I am have come staggering up to me at my quarters here and begged me for God's sake to give him a morsel of something to eat. As yet I have not seen one man, and I have been particular in my enquiries, but who, upon being interrogated on the subject, regretted that he had sacrificed the luxuries and pleasures of home and undertaken an expedition, which, let it result as it would, never could repay them for the sacrifices they have made and the sufferings they have endured.

Now a very palatable and pretty off-set to all these sufferings and inconveniences could be found in a series of successful operations in the mines. But how do we find the workings there? Why was it reasonable to expect we should find it? If anything unusual is discovered at home, however extraordinary it may be, who can resist its exaggeration while relating it? But in this country a gold mine was discovered, *gold* the thing that most men suppose constitutes the basis of happiness. The pursuit of all God's creatures— what excitement, what intensity of feeling, and what unnatural and unaccountable stories would be the legitimate result of this discovery! The thousands of God's creatures—men, who, tired and somewhat disappointed at the attempts and strivings they had made in this world for this world's goods and found it a hard and somewhat difficult task—readily consented to cast their destinies in an expedition which promised so fair in its results: *the accumulation of great wealth in a short, easy, and speedy manner*. Ere they had been two months at sea, ere they had been two months on the long, tedious march by land, when the hour at last arrived which brought conviction to the sober-minded judgment, they simply wished themselves back home at their accustomed employments. When their dangers, and trials, and difficulties increased, when time still drew more heavily on their hands as they became further removed from their native homes and as a consequence from all the luxuries and refinements of civilized life, when in their habitudes and food they were compelled to adopt the customs and usages of the untamed and uncivilized savage, they thought still stronger of friends and home and regretted still more their silly haste in making their resolution. But when they at last reach the place of their destination and see their bright dreams a delusion, when stern necessity and truth forces the conviction that although gold exists abundantly and may be obtained in the placers, the only difference in obtaining it here and elsewhere is that here you have to work like a slave, badly fed, most miserably clothed, away from society, friends, home, everything that is dear and pleasant to a human being in a state of artificial society, while in the states you labor, it is true, but have all the accompaniments and enjoyments the exact opposite of those above enumerated. Now sing ye that still have the "fever," "Oh California that's the place for me," but at the same time be assured you'll sing a different tune and out the other side of your mouth if you ever come here.

It is not difficult to form the conclusion from what I have said in this and my former letters that I am by no means partial to this country. The fact is, no place under God's heaven has ever been more misrepresented. What could have induced men who have traveled in Upper California to give such a false coloring to their accounts I cannot tell, unless it be that they were deceived by others, or supposed their books would not have popular favor without the dress of romance with which they clothed all their descriptions. The idea has often occurred to me as to what this superabundant emigration will eventually do. Some will no doubt make money at the mines, others of speculations of various kinds will amass wealth, but the great body of emigrants must inevitably be disappointed. What will become of them? I think the answer to this question is decidedly a case of "*Quién sabe?*" A great many are already returning. The steamers are now as much crowded on their downward trips as they were formerly going up. But still the tide of emigration is pouring in from every quarter. There is not a seaport in South America but has poured out her hundreds for the gold region. England, France, Germany, Holland have sent out these vessels loaded with emigrants. Next, I suppose, Asia and Africa will lend us their tributaries, and then we will have a mongrel tribe out here something after the Babel confusion.

A great many handsome fortunes have already been made and a great many more will be made in this country. But where one fortune is accumulated a thousand will be ruined. The tide of fortune here is as fickle as the tide of fortune in battle. Of one thing you may rest assured that *my* fortune must be made very speedily if I remain in this country. I would rather live in the old County of Fairfield at a salary of $250 per annum than remain here at $2,500, provided it was to be for any length of time. Now I have no doubt but that my account will differ very materially from many that you will read coming from authentic sources. I can give you nothing more than my own impressions and the convictions of my sober judgment based upon what I have seen. Now you may hear for instance that carpenters are receiving ten dollars per day at San Francisco, and yet the steamer which left this port but a few days since had no less than twelve good carpenters on board who were returning home because they were disgusted with the country. Well, now it ain't any very disgusting affair to be receiving as wages ten dollars per day.

The same steamer was carrying home what was left of **Sam McNeil**. I had not the pleasure of seeing Sam, but learned from Tom Wilson who saw him that he had been unsuccessful and was on his way home. I think that McNeil was a great fool for leaving, for according to his own account he had made $1,200 by keeping a boarding tent and that too in the space of six weeks. This was more money than he ever saw in his life, and I suppose he thought—being a little homesick and scared—that he was rich, and consequently retired. Now a man in McNeil's circumstance is just the man for this country, having nothing to lose and everything to gain. In subjecting himself to the privations and annoyances which we all endure out here, he can't consider it much of a sacrifice, for I question the personal comfort of a man in his position even when living in the state of Ohio. Tom Wilson is at last in the mines, and I hope he is doing well. It may be possible that by this time some one of the Lancaster Boys have made a rich haul—if they have I have not heard of it. From my last accounts none of them had accomplished anything. Their money had all given out and they were compelled to draw on **Sherman**. **Rankin** had been at the mines but frizzled and is now attempting the practice of the law in connection with **Hart** at San Francisco.

William Tecumseh Sherman was also a Lancaster native and well-known to the Effinger family, attending Michael Effinger's wedding just before reporting to duty in California in 1846. Sherman was stationed at Monterey throughout the Mexican-American War and was in contact with Effinger and the "Lancaster Boys" in California during the fall of 1849. "Sherman has made some money in this country and had it not have been for his high sense of honor as an army officer, he would now be a millionaire." Courtesy of the National Archives.

San Diego
October 4th 1849

My Dear Mike, you can't imagine my joy and happiness in seeing yours and John's letters, not a word from home for so long, so long, But all's right now, and I can go ahead, like a little steamboat.

God Bless you all
Your Affectionate Brother
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

Riley's narrative refers to the adventures of James Riley (1777–1840), first published in 1817 as *Authentic narrative of the loss of the American brig Commerce, wrecked on the western coast of Africa, in the month of August, 1815, with an account of the sufferings of her surviving officers and crew, who were enslaved by the wandering Arabs*, and in twenty-five editions before the Civil War. Considered "the most important and influential of all American Barbary narratives," the book also spawned a sequel that appeared in 1851 as well as enormously popular accounts by crew members, which Riley himself had a hand in producing. R. P. Effinger was not the only American to include reference to Riley's sufferings: Henry David Thoreau on the sand dunes at Cape Cod conjured Riley's account of the Sahara; Abraham Lincoln counted Riley's narrative among the five most influential books in his life ("along with the Bible, Aesop's *Fables*, Plutarch's *Lives*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*"). Riley's tales of camels, exotic Arabs, and catching and eating locusts were more than adventure fantasies; they had moral significance for him once he was back in the United States. Interestingly, he settled in Van Weft County, Ohio, where he was involved in the developing canal system and where he became a firm supporter of emancipation. His experience as a captive slave in Africa pointed the way to a new understanding: "If slavery was wrong for a Connecticut sea captain in Africa, Riley made plain, it was wrong for people of African descent in America. Redemption from slavery among the Arabs transformed Riley. . . ."[45] A recent edition has been published as *Sufferings in Africa—Captain Riley's narrative: an authentic narrative of the loss of the American brig Commerce, wrecked on the western coast of Africa, in the month of August, 1815* by James Riley, edited with an introduction by Gordon H. Evans.[46]

Sam McNeil: See note page 11. McNeil called his Sacramento boarding tent the "Sycamore Tree Establishment" and describes it in his diary, along with many stories concerning the misfortunes of gold seekers and difficulties in the mines. As Effinger thought McNeil mistaken to return to Ohio, McNeil believed that professional men like Effinger were mistaken to go to California in the first place, since they were not accustomed to hard work.[47] Embittered at the way some of the Lancaster boys treated him during the difficult journey across Mexico and up the coast, McNeil wrote:

> I will notice more proceedings at my tent, but I must begin by saying the Lancaster boys are arriving. The vessel I sailed in from Mazatlan arrived at San Francisco two months before the French brig in which they voyaged. The catholics have their hell in purgatory, the universalists theirs on earth, but the Lancaster boys were to have theirs on the Pacific ocean for their conduct towards me. They arrived at Sacramento City without money, and wished to borrow $50 from me. I readily agreed to let them have it. They wrote a joint note, not with a pen, but with a pencil, that through rubbing in the pocket book it would soon rub out. I observed to them at the time that they need not think I am a fool because some may consider me an ignorant shoemaker, for I had discovered why they wished to have the note written with a flimsy pencil, and would not, in consequence, let them have $50 on any terms. That was a great revolution in feelings, after wishing to shoot me at Mazatlan, to try to borrow money from me at Sacramento City; but the reader will see that the same principle, or rather want of principle, was exhibited both in the shooting business and the borrowing affair. They then took a pleasure trip to Smith's Bar, and I never heard anything of them afterwards. From the time of my

> landing in San Francisco, June 1, to the present time, August 20, I had accumulated $1,500, that is, cleared that sum, after paying all expenses. I firmly believe that, if I had not been bothered and delayed through Texas and Mexico by the Lancaster boys—that is, if the wagons had been sold, and we had muled it in 30 days instead of the two months the trip occupied, I might have doubled the $1,500 between the dates I mentioned.

McNeil returned to Ohio with a total of $2,000, after having traveled on the steamer *Panama* down the Pacific coast with stops in Monterey, Santa Barbara, San Diego, Mazatlán, Acapulco, and then Panama. He had visited with Sutter, discussing Frémont disparagingly, and had seen and disapproved of excessive drinking, gambling, and all other activity that was not connected with practical hard work and clean living.

McNeil's point of view is especially interesting because he was a working man and an exact contemporary of Effinger's. Both hailed from Lancaster and both spent about the same time in California:

> It is now August 20, and Walker and myself are at San Francisco, waiting for a passage to the States. The U.S. Mail steamer "Panama," is anchored in the bay, three miles from the town, appointed to sail Sept. 2d. She is commanded by Capt. Baily. Our tickets for the steerage, in that ship, cost us each $150. I could have sold my ticket for $250, as there were about one thousand more than the steamer could take, wishing passage to the States. There I saw several of the Lancaster boys. I call them boys, for men would not have acted towards me as they did. They had not, as yet, made one dollar. They tried to persuade me to stay longer in that country, but they could not succeed. I told them that I had seen the elephant, which had a longer tail and a bigger snout than the usual elephants. That I was satisfied with the small bucket full of gold I had accumulated, and would not stay to see it running over the sides like milk from a pail, as I was no advocate for wastefulness. Perhaps they had not sense enough in their contracted skulls to understand the homely illustration of the Lancaster shoemaker. If so, they may die with their wisdom, as its loss will be not the least loss to the world . . . . although I am a shoe maker, I may offer some good reflections on the value of California to the world, and to the United States in particular . . . . In the shop at home in Lancaster I have cobbled the understanding of others: and in many cases have supplied entirely new understandings to the shoes and boots of customers. So, in my reflections, I may improve the understandings of some on Californian matters, and impart to others entirely new understandings of those subjects. Some proverb says, that the shoemaker should not go beyond his last, but this is a free country, and shoemakers have as much right to quit their last, and go to California to dig gold and offer their views, as persons of any other trade or profession have . . . . As in this volume I am neither whig nor democrat, therefore I shall offer no remarks on the justness or unjustness of the war with Mexico which placed California in our hands. It is enough for me to say that California in time will become the pivot on which our national glory will revolve,—in fact, will become the centre of the world. Here nations will meet and shake hands with each other.—Asia coming from over the Pacific ocean, and Europe from over the Atlantic, grasping the huge paws of Uncle Sam beyond the Rocky Mountains—in our now Great West—and wishing him the highest success, because their own interests will be advanced in our growing prosperity. How we are spreading as a nation. About three quarters of a century since we had about three millions of people, but now we have extended our dominions from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, with a population numbering more than twenty millions—and many now living, before they die shall see somewhere about a hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants within the borders I have mentioned . . . . Without the shadow of a doubt, in the future, we may number fifty states, containing three hundred millions of people!
>
> Let the shoemaker philosophise a little longer on this subject . . . . Uncle Sam has a philosopher's stone in his Californian and Oregonian possessions which turns everything it touches to gold. Let us see what a railroad, by Whitney or any other enterprising individual or company, connecting the two shores, will accomplish. New York, which is within ten days of Europe by steamer, will then be within twenty-five days of China by that railroad and a steamer connecting its terminus with the Celestial Empire. The Chinese themselves will acknowledge that our country, instead of theirs, will be the true Celestial Empire . . . . The Genius of Liberty is giving Europe a vomiting dose, and she is about disgorging her surplus population, fleeing for life and liberty, more plentifully than ever upon our inviting shores. We must have more room and more employment for the coming seekers for liberty, in order to do out part in carrying out the design of the Supreme Disposer of events. The

> East and West shall meet them with expanded arms, and the wilderness between shall bloom like a rose that they may safely worship the Almighty and secure their own rights. Since the crucifixion, the Star of Empire has westwardly held on its brightening way, crossing the Atlantic ocean, and is now sending down its reviving rays on Oregon and California. It is plain that we are to become the mediator between both sides of the old world. God has given us the political and moral means for doing it, and now he is imparting the Californian gold that we may employ our increased talents with better effect.[48]

William Tecumseh Sherman (1820–1891) was born in Lancaster. After the death of his father, an Ohio supreme court judge, "Cump," as he was known in the family circle, was raised in the household of Thomas Ewing (1789–1871), a U.S. senator (1831-36 and 1850-51), U.S. secretary of the treasury (1841), and secretary of the interior (1849-50). Influenced by his father's example, and guided by Ewing toward a military career, Sherman attended West Point and graduated in 1840. He returned to Lancaster in 1846 to be present at the marriage of his friend Mike Effinger and also in 1850 to marry Ellen Ewing, but never lived there again.

Sherman was stationed in California at Monterey throughout the Mexican-American War and was in contact with Effinger and the "Lancaster Boys" in California during the fall of 1849; Effinger speculated in his letter of October 31 that brother Eddy might accompany Cump to Lancaster, and at the end of December, Effinger wrote that Sherman had plans to board the next steamer, scheduled to depart on January 1, 1850. Although Sherman resigned his commission in 1853, due to family concerns and in search of more gratifying pursuits, time spent in San Francisco as a banker (1853–1857) was fraught with difficulty. The Civil War brought him back to military service, where he made a significant mark, becoming very popular and famous, if sometimes controversial. He retired from the army in 1883.[48]

William R. Rankin, identified by McNeil as "state attorney" and one of his traveling companions setting out from Lancaster, was Prosecuting Attorney of Fairfield County from 1848 to 1852. On the outward journey Rankin took ship on the *Alabama* in New Orleans with Effinger and Tom Wilson (in Colonel Weller's party) for Chagres, and Effinger mentioned him several times in his letters. According to Effinger, Rankin left California "broken down in spirit," as a result of owing some $10,000 and being pursued by "what are vulgarly called at home, body snatchers."[50]

Jesse B. Hart, who was with McNeil and other Lancaster boys leaving New Orleans on the *Maria Burt*, forced back, and then traveled overland to Mazatlán, was a third lawyer from Lancaster throwing his lot into the Gold Rush. He practiced law in San Francisco, repeatedly asking Effinger to join him, which he finally did "of counsel" in January 1850 after having failed to be elected to the southern district judgeship by the new legislature. Flying high with his legal practice and real estate speculation, Jesse Hart sent for his family to join him in San Francisco. Hart was one of the few Lancaster Boys who did not return to Ohio.[51]

October 31 1849
Camp Riley near San Diego

Dear Brother Mike,

Aware of the delicate nature of political appointments to the very important Boundary Commission, and tuned into the rivalries and jockeying for power that occupied principal participants such as Weller and Frémont, Effinger explained to his brother that he had deliberately omitted discussion in his letters of these issues.

I have just returned from my mountain expedition which I expected would have been a trip of pleasure, but which certainly turned out to be the hardest week's work at which I have ever been employed. I was so anxious to hear from home and Eddy that I went to San Diego (having learned that the steamer was in) on the 4th of October. This made it necessary for me to ride a distance of sixty miles in order to reach in time the place of my operations. I rode day and night and reached the top of the Cerro Colorado about two hours before the time that my operations commenced. My instructions directed me to look out for a rocket at Major Emory's observatory at seven p.m. You must bear in mind that Major Emory was stationed on the Pacific; my station was on one of the high peaks of the Sierra Nevada. Two minutes after I saw Emory's rocket, I sent one up from my solitary peak which was seen by Captain Hardcastle stationed on the Los Pinos. From this last station could be seen **Mount Wickamon** upon which Lieutenant Slaughter was stationed and to whom Hardcastle communicated by sending up a rocket. Lieutenant Whipple, who was stationed at the junction of the Gila and Colorado rivers, was able to see Slaughter's rocket and in this very a-la-mode telegraph' we opened up a communication. We then commenced flashing with powder at every four minutes, sending up rockets every thirty minutes. This order was observed for five nights commencing on the evening of the 5th and ending on the evening of the 9th.

I had taken up my quarters at the Rancho de Tijuana, a ranch four miles distant from the Cerro Colorado and owned by **Don Santiago Arguello**, one of the oldest and wealthiest inhabitants of the country. It was necessary for me therefore to climb the mountain every evening and in consequence of the density of the fog and clouds, I was compelled to remain there all night. The first evening I attempted to come down (my operations ended at 9:19 p.m.), but when we reached the clouds (my station was way above the clouds), we lost our way and had it not been for my Indian guide I should never have reached the foot of the mountain. As it was, one of the soldiers under my command became separated from the party and did not find his way to camp until ten the next morning. It was a grand and magnificent sight, to see the clouds come rolling in from the Pacific Ocean from the top of the Cerro Colorado. They would form themselves about mid-way up the mountain and assume every variety of shape. Long before sundown nothing could be seen except the high peaks of the mountains. The clouds spread themselves all along the lowlands and valleys representing in their variety of formation high ridges and rivers.

"The country is full of politicians . . . who have been broken down at home [and] have rushed to this country with the idea that political laurels may be obtained here irrespective of merit or capacity."

I believe I have never yet given you an account of the beauty and domestic economy of the inhabitants of California. As my residence at Arguello's ranch affords me subjects for both, I will give you the best possible idea that my limited means will allow. Señor Arguello and his wife are as hale and hearty an old couple as you can *ever* meet with in this country of longevity. They have been married forty years, have had twenty-one children and ain't done adding to the human family yet. They have now twenty-six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. This is a moderate California family. **Señora Bandini**, the wife of **Don Juan Bandini** of San Diego, is the flower of the flock, and she is certainly as pretty a woman as I ever saw, notwithstanding she is the mother of two rousing boys and three pretty, fair-faced daughters. Her complexion is as fresh and as fair as Lib Tacy's. The Bandini family, however, reside in the presidio of San Diego, and I only speak of them here because they were all on a visit to the ranch during my sojourn there. Bandini owns the finest house in California and it is here we have all our parties, *bailes*, etc. There are three granddaughters of old Arguello who reside with him at the ranch. **Señora Flores**, the wife of **General Flores**, is one of the prettiest women in California. Her husband during the last war took an active part against the U.S. and for reasons too delicate to mention in this connection was divorced shortly after the termination of the war. In addition to Mrs. Flores there are Señorita Teresa, Señorita Josepha, and Señorita Maria Eulalia, three as pretty girls as I ever met with in my life. These young ladies have no education whatever. They can neither read nor write.

The family gets out of bed about nine o'clock in the morning when they have coffee. After coffee the girls commence combing and dressing their hair, and such hair, rich long tresses of auburn and black. After they have finished their toilette, breakfast is announced, which consists of all kinds of meats roasted, frijoles, tortillas, chili and a variety of Mexican dishes too tedious to mention. After breakfast they all take their siesta, which lasts till about two o'clock when dinner is announced. This consists of a variety of Mexican soups, followed with boiled mutton, boiled beef, roasted mutton, roasted beef, a plentiful repetition of frijoles, tortillas and *sandías* and *melones* and concludes like all their other meals with cigarillos. They have a repast of some kind again at five and seven p. m., making six meals a day, and the quantity that they eat at each meal would frighten one of our greatest epicures out of his appetite. They never perform the first particle of work, having about twenty Indian servants for this purpose. Thus their time is passed from one part of the year to another in eating, drinking, and sleeping. When the family all sit out under the porch to have a social talk, instead of getting out their knitting needles or sewing as is the case with our industrious American women, they each of them take an Indian basket filled with tobacco and small strips of paper and commence making and smoking the cigarillos.

"I have taken up my quarters at the Rancho de Tijuana . . . owned by Don Santiago Arguello, one of the oldest and wealthiest inhabitants of the countr. . . . Señor Arguello and his wife are as hale and hearty an old couple as you can ever meet with in this country of longevity. They have been married forty years, have had twenty-one children and ain't done adding to the human family yet. They have now twenty-six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren." Courtesy of the San Diego Historical Society.

All California women have pretty hair and eyes and teeth and some of them very fair and pretty faces. There is a lady in San Diego, the wife of **Don Miguel de Pedrorena** who in action, appearance, and everything resembles Eliza Noble perfectly. I never in my life saw such a striking resemblance. They all dance and waltz remarkably well and this is their only amusement. From this imperfect description you will have no difficulty in arriving to the conclusion that it is no great intellectual treat to pass a week or two with a California family. And yet a happier or more contented set of people never lived. Every member of the family seems to vie with each other in administering to your comforts, but tender their services and attention with so much delicacy and politeness that you are neither embarrassed nor made to feel unpleasant in accepting their many acts of kindness.

I have made myself very popular with this class of people by mingling much with them as much from curiosity as necessity. I am learning their language rapidly; in fact, I speak Spanish now well enough for all practical purposes in this country and every day adds to my improvement. What I have said in this letter favorable to Spanish character, I do not wish you to take as including the male part of the race, for with a few exceptions they are the most deceitful, treacherous set of beings in the world. You can place no dependence whatever in either what they say or do. Deceit and treachery is so much a part of their character and education that it taints every act of their life. The grand end and aim of their life seems to be to practice a deception on you and then by some wily ingenious manner cover it up. You can see this lurking treachery in their eye when with their "*Como ésta Usté*" ("how dy'a do"). They extend their hand and show their ivory like the dastardly **Carker** in *Dombey and Son*. The deceitful rascals, you can't trust them and I fear they will never make good American citizens, howsomeever—as the Washington letter writers have it, "***nous verrous***."

I am compelled in consequences of the active life I lead here to write my letters in such haste that I never know what I have written, and I fear that I pass over many important and interesting matters in order that I may not be guilty of repetition. I very seldom remain more than forty-eight hours in the same place and am therefore compelled to write my letters in *snatches*—and often under very unfavorable circumstances. True, my temporary residence has been at Camp Riley, but most of the time I am in the saddle.

Don Juan Bandini and his daughter Margarita. Effinger never failed to report on the local beauties to the folks back home, even if he disparaged their accomplishments. "Bandini owns the finest house in California and it is here we have all our parties, bailes, etc. There are three granddaughters of old Arguello who reside with him at the ranch . . . as pretty girls as I ever met with in my life. But these young ladies have no education whatever. They can neither read nor write." Courtesy San Diego Historical Society.

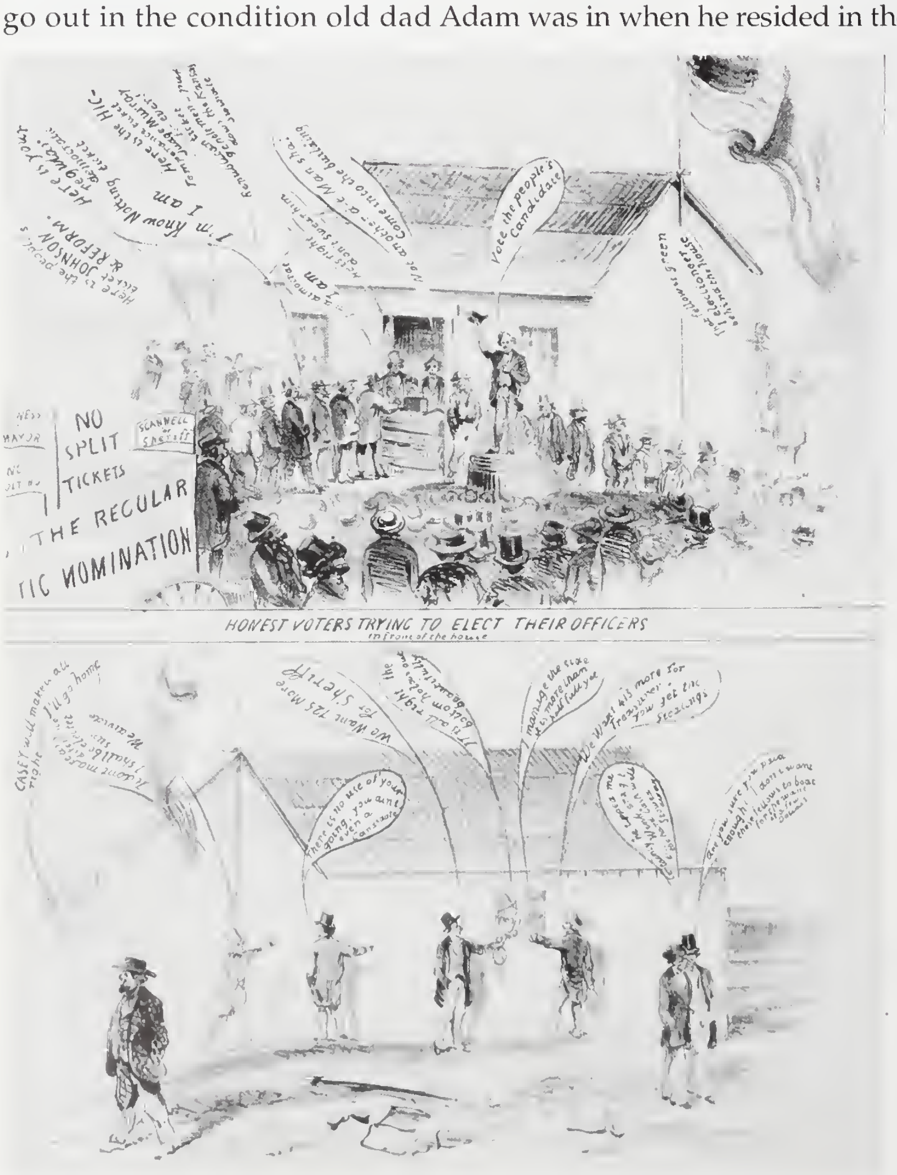
Although the elections of California have passed, I do not recollect of having ever said anything to you about it. The fact is I neither took an active part nor felt any interest in the result of the elections. I did not even vote, knowing full well that it would disqualify me as an elector in the state of Ohio, and I was not willing to give up my citizenship there for the glory of using the elective franchise here. My friends were exceedingly anxious that I should run on the ticket for supreme judge of the district of San Diego, salary six thousand dollars. Now this will sound very large when you read it, and it would look so to a man up a tree. But to one who is here upon the soil of California and who prides himself that he can at least appreciate the substance of things, it don't look quite so immense. I could unquestionably have been elected, but the appointment could only have been temporary, accompanied with a great deal of trouble and expense—and the payment of the salary uncertain. H. H. Robinson Esq. ran as a candidate for the convention but was defeated in consequence of the opposition of some of the officers of the escort who, it is said, used unfair influences with the soldiers under their command, which induced them to vote against him. The **convention** met at Monterey on the 1st of September, the proceedings of which you will find in all the public journals of the country.

It was certainly a very respectable body considering the time and manner in which it was gotten up, and they have probably done the very best that could be done under the circumstances. The country is full of politicians, men who have been broken down in politics at home, who either for want of merit or spreading their sails in adverse winds, have rushed to this country with the idea that political laurels may be obtained here irrespective of merit or capacity. Their disappointment in this will be as great as the gold seekers who think fortunes can be accumulated here without great labor and hazard. The aspirants for office in this country, for U. S. senators, representatives, both in Congress and in the state legislature, in the judicial and executive departments are more numerous than blackberries in the rich valleys of Ohio. To a man who has really any pride of character, it is disgusting to see not only the avidity and selfishness with which persons in this country pursue *gold* but *office*, and I must say that any desire to enter into the contests for either is lessening every day. But I shall not detain you with political news of California. You can derive much more correct information from this department by consulting the newspapers.

If I should give you a full account of the religion and morals of California, you would form the opinion that I had become rather heathenish in my habits. Why I haven't heard tell of such a thing as a Sabbath since I left home. There is a day in the week out here that they call *Sunday*, but instead of being set apart for religious observances; it is the day for military parades, picnics, dances, big dinners and all that kind of thing. All the fine *bailes* given at San Diego take place Sunday evening. Every Sunday is a kind of "militia general muster-day." The people in this country *rest* six days in the week and then kick up particular hell on Sunday, to make up, I suppose, for lost time.

I was in San Diego last Sunday, and the description of this day will answer for nearly every Sabbath I have spent here. In the morning at about nine o'clock there was a grand military parade by the company of dragoons part of the escort for the Boundary service. At two o'clock the commissioner gave a grand dinner, whereupon all the members of the Commission who had been invited to said dinner got gloriously happy and monstrous uproarious. In the meantime the native Californians, Indians and squaws, gathered into town and commenced gambling at their usual and popular game—monte. All the natives here gamble. They will play the shirts off their backs. I have often seen an Indian come in town tolerably well dressed and then go out in the condition old dad Adam was in when he resided in the Garden of Eden. I tell you this thing of gambling is universal. I have known the priest to go from mass to the monte table and there *devote* the rest of his Sabbath. On the Sunday I now speak of the priest had baptized a child, a son of Señor Pico, and in the evening said Pico gave a grand *baile* in honor of said child. This dance lasted the balance of the night and thus closed Sunday. The missionary societies could do God's service in this country.

And now to give you the most recent intelligence from the *gold regions*. Colonel Weller returned on the last steamer. He says that the climate at San Francisco is most horrible. The nights throughout the

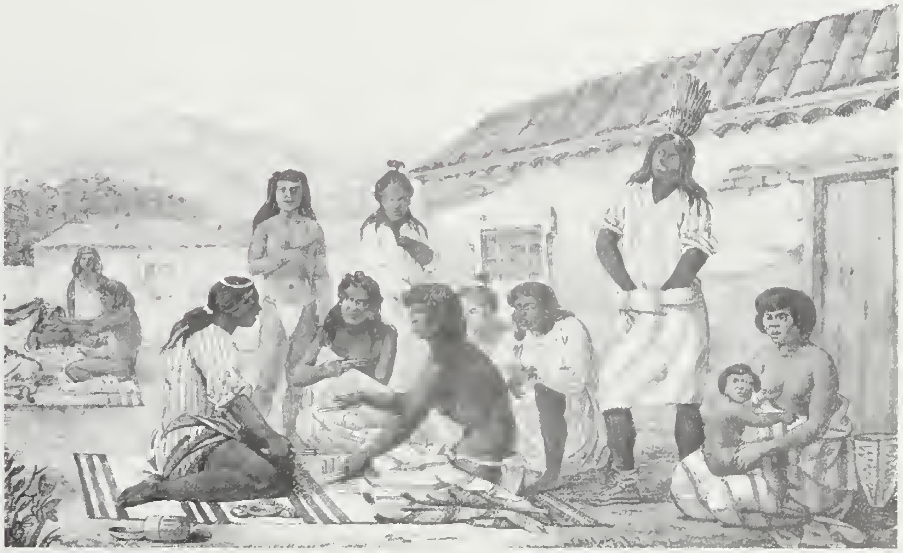

Here is your regular democratic ticket
Here is the people's ticket JOHNSON & REFORM.
Here is the HIG- Temperance ticket Judge Murray for ever!
Republican ticket gentlemen—put down the Kansas swindle
I'm Know Nothing I am
I am a democrat
He's right don't swear him
Not another d—t Man sha. Come into the building
Vote the people's candidate
That fellow is green I electioneer behind the house
NO SPLIT TICKETS
SCANNELL for SHERIFF
THE REGULAR
TIC NOMINATION
HONEST VOTERS TRYING TO ELECT THEIR OFFICERS
in front of the house
CASEY will make us all right
I'll go home
It dont matter I shall be elected
We advise
We Want 725 More for Sheriff
It is all right the bottom holes out beautifully
We Want 415 more for Treasurer. You get the Stealings
There is no use of your going you aint even a constable

From the beginning, California's elections have been tumultuous. Effinger, however, passed up an opportunity to run for office—or even vote. "My friends were exceedingly anxious that I should run on the ticket for supreme judge of the district of San Diego. . . . I could unquestionably have been elected, but the appointment could only have been temporary, accompanied with a great deal of trouble and expense—and the payment of the salary uncertain. . . . I did not even vote, knowing full well that it would disqualify me as an elector in the state of Ohio, and I was not willing to give up my citizenship there for the glory of using the elective franchise here." California Historical Society, FN-35932.

whole year are excessively cold and disagreeable. It is necessary to wear winter clothing the whole year round and, by the way, so it is here. Ever since I landed here I have worn my thickest winter clothing—and wear thick flannel shirts and drawers, a thing I could not endure in Ohio. This is rather singular when you consider we are on the same latitude with Charleston, S.C. In San Francisco there are three sets of houses: gambling houses and restaurants, lawyer's offices, and doctor's offices. The first embodies about two-thirds of the place. Hundreds of poor devils, overtaken by misfortune or disappointed in their search after gold, starving, sick, and dying are wandering about the town, seeking what in this country can seldom be found: charity and shelter. Many prove more fortunate and make money very rapidly but not at the high figures reported. You know very well that if I should come home and *splurge* around with ten thousand dollars, the community would exaggerate my fortune to five times the amount. Persons are much more disposed to this species of exaggeration out here than we are at home. You see it is practicably impossible for any one man by his individual effort; I don't care how lucky or fortunate he may be, to dig an extravagant quantity of gold in a short space of time. But unless a man is fortunate from the start, he will soon fall astern in consequence of the high prices charged for every necessary article either of food or clothing. You have to pay six dollars a dozen for washing and yet fine shirts are sold at $111 per dozen which cost in the states eighteen or twenty dollars! They are now sending small schooners from San Francisco to the Sandwich Islands freighted with **dirty clothes** to have them washed. Colonel Weller must saddle the responsibility of this last statement. I won't vouch for it.

Goods of all kind are sold very high at retail but very low at wholesale prices. The reason for this is very obvious, viz, retailers are compelled to pay such extravagant prices for houses. I saw one man going home on the last steamer, a butcher, and report said that he had made ten thousand dollars during the last summer in the mines and at his trade. As an evidence of his success he wore a gold chain weighing two pounds, which he had made at San Francisco. Now on this same steamer there were 250 passengers and this was the only passenger whom notoriety pointed out as having been successful. I have no doubt in my own mind that many persons are like Sam McNeil. They "give in" too soon, and yet I cannot in my heart pity the poor fellows, for they are certainly subjected to privations and sufferings of which you can form no conception. The hardships that the gold seeker in California has to endure are much greater than that of a soldier in time of war. The latter has a government to feed and clothe him. Independent of his own exertions he need never fear dying by starvation. The campaigner in California has to battle against all the elements of God and all the passions of man. I have seen and talked with *hundreds* who have tried their fortunes in the mines, including all variety of character, and I have only found *one man* whose energies and efforts had been crowned with success, and *that* man was the aforesaid butcher, who was so rash and mad as to risk his future happiness, probably his life, on a road to wealth so perilous and uncertain as this!

The last steamer brought me many letters from friends and acquaintances from San Francisco, offering me many inducements to go to that section of country. **Major**


"All the natives here gamble. They will play the shirts off their backs. I have often seen an Indian come in town tolerably well dressed and then go out in the condition old dad Adam was in when he resided in the Garden of Eden." *"Jeu des Habitans de Californie"* by Louis Choris, 1822. California Historical Society, FN-35939.

McKinstry of the U. S. Army, formerly the quartermaster of the escort to the Boundary Survey, was very anxious for me to come up to Bear River in the Sacramento Valley and assist him in the capacity of assistant commissary in the erection of a fort. I think I shall accept this proposition but cannot determine so definitely until after Frémont's arrival here. You see that the acceptance of this proposition will give me this advantage: I will be located in the gold regions with all the advantages any of the miners have and will at the same time be receiving my boarding and clothing from government together with a salary of $250 per month. I should have accepted this proposition forthwith and gone up to San Francisco in the last steamer but was prevented from doing so in consequence of my previous engagement with Major Emory and Captain Hardcastle to assist them in their operations on the mountains.

I have now completed this engagement and am therefore free to go, but I very foolishly loaned all my funds to Colonel Weller just before he went to San Francisco and he, being unable to raise any funds there, I am now compelled to wait the arrival of Frémont, the new commissioner, who, I have been assured, will be possessed of sufficient funds to defray the expenses of the commission. I feel considerable uneasiness about the state of my funds, for I know the appropriation made by Congress has about run out, and should Colonel Weller's brother, who left for Washington City last May, be unable to raise funds, or should Frémont refuse to defray expenses incurred by the last commissioner, I will have to whistle for my pay. I have not drawn one cent of my salary since I have been connected with the Commission and have loaned to the commissioner about nine hundred dollars. Add to this when Frémont comes here he will be compelled to disband the whole commission until a new appropriation is made, in which event I will be paid my transportation home, amounting to $400 or $500. Notwithstanding, therefore, the inducements that have been offered me to go to the placers, my interest requires that I should for a short time at least remain here. Frémont is daily expected, but until he does arrive I can give you no clue to my future course. Although I speak very despairingly of California, now that I am here, I intend to give it a fair trial. But when I do leave for home probably the first notification you will have of it will be my personal presence.

Your Affect Bro:
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

Mount Wickamon or Point Wickapoo, as Effinger called the height occupied by Lt. Slaughter, was probably a peak just east of Tecate Summit on current Interstate 8 in the In-Ko-Pah or Jacumba Mountains.

Arguello: Although Effinger was proud of picking up a number of Spanish words and phrases while he was in California, and rendered some of them correctly in his letters, there were some words and names that he failed to master. One example is the name Santiago Arguello (sometimes Argüello). Although Effinger misspelled the name as "San Iago Arguilla," and placed a wayward umlaut over the "r," he understood perfectly the prestige and power of this leading figure in mid-nineteenth century San Diego. Son of José Darío Santiago (1754–1827?), Spanish governor of California (1814–1815), and brother of Luis Antonio Arguello (1784–1830), second Mexican governor of Alta California and first native-born Californian to be governor, Santiago Arguello (1792–1862) married Maria del Pilar Salvadora Ortega (daughter of Francisco Ortega from the prominent Santa Barbara Ortega clan).

Don Santiago was the first owner of Rancho de Tijuana, which he acquired in 1829. In 1841 he obtained Rancho Trabuco, and in 1846 the San Diego mission estate. He had entered military service in San Francisco in 1805, served in Santa Barbara and San Diego, and then held a succession of civil and military leadership posts: member of the provincial congress, commandant of San Diego presidio, *comisionado* for San Diego mission, alcalde of San Diego, *comisionado* of San Juan Capistrano mission, and prefect in Los Angeles and San Diego. Arguello made friends with Americans as they came to California, as he did to the Boundary Commission. As Effinger reported, Don Santiago and Doña Pilar had twenty-two children, who married into the Bandini, Zamorano, Olvera, and other prominent Californio families. Santiago "was tall, stout, and of fine presence, with fair complexion and black hair; reserved in manner, yet of kindly disposition. His record, public and private, was an honorable if not a brilliant one. He was often in trouble with his brother officers and with men of other classes, and especially in the earlier years was by no means a popular man. This was chiefly due to a peculiar reserve or haughtiness of manner, attributed to family pride and regarded as an assumption of superiority."[52]

Bandini: María del Refugio Francisca Lugarda Arguello (born 1817) married **Juan Bandini** (1800–1859) at San Diego mission on February 7, 1835. Born in Peru to a Spanish sea captain, Bandini joined the Californio gentry as a ranchero and political leader. He was alcalde of San Diego at the time of Effinger's visit. Abel Stearns and Cave J. Couts were sons-in-law.[53]

José María Flores was a Mexican army officer stationed in California beginning in 1842, who became embroiled in the changing political scenes of the times. He sided with Californios who resisted American conquest, forcing him to flee to Sonora. This break with the accommodation policy followed by his father-in-law may explain the divorce "for reasons too delicate to mention" that Effinger refers to.

The woman Effinger describes as the would-be clone of Eliza Noble in Lancaster, Ohio, was **María Antonia Estudillo**, who had married **Don Miguel de Pedrorena**, a Spaniard who arrived in California via Peru in 1838, became a San Diego ranchero and politico, and served as a delegate to the first constitutional convention.

Carker: In Charles Dickens's 1848 novel, *Dombey and Son*, John Carker is a deceitful man with very white teeth.

Nous verrons means "we will see" in French. Several of the clippings from unidentified newspapers—perhaps the *Alta California*—in the Effinger collection, contain the then popular phrase, as Effinger indicates. *Nous verrons* implies a poetic or philosophical sense such as "time will tell" or "the future will reveal."

Convention: The constitutional convention that Governor Bennet Riley called was surprisingly efficient. Besides writing a constitution that was enacted and in operation prior to statehood being granted, the forty-eight delegates meeting in Monterey September to November 1849 agreed that the document and succeeding important legislation be bilingual. They determined other paraphernalia of government, such as designating the capital (at San Jose), determining the state seal, and the establishing state's boundaries.[54]

Dirty laundry: Colonel Weller was correct, but it is forgivable that Effinger would doubt so unlikely an event as sending dirty linen abroad to be laundered. However, the general labor shortage, surplus of sailing vessels in San Francisco harbor, and the disinclination of the mostly male population to wash their clothes, indeed induced enterprising fellows to ship laundry to Hawaii and China. Additionally, the relative ease of cargo transport between China and California encouraged the importation of manufactured goods from China (rather than from the American east coast), thereby providing plenty of cargo space on westbound crossings. "Much linen was sent to Canton and the Hawaiian Islands to be washed," notes Bancroft.[55]

Justus McKinstry (1814–1897) graduated from West Point in 1838, served in the Seminole War and the Mexican-American War, and then traveled to California in the Boundary Commission escort. Later, as quartermaster for the Western Department in St. Louis under Frémont, he was accused of numerous irregularities and a court martial took place in October of 1862; he was cashiered January 1863. His post-military career was as a stockbroker and land agent. His younger brother, Elisha Williams McKinistry (1825–1901), arrived in California about the same time but achieved a more distinguished future: he was elected to the state supreme court in 1879, later was dean of Hastings College of Law, and with his son James and other partners, founded the law firm of Stanley, McKinstry, Bradley & McKinstry.

November 5th 1849
San Diego

Dear Mike,
We confidently expected that Frémont would arrive in this steamer [the *California*], pay us off and disband the commission, but it seems he has other fish to fry. The legislature meets the middle of December, and Frémont is playing his cards for the U.S. Senate. But at the same time holding on to his appointment as commissioner, which he intends to accept or reject, just as his chances turn for or against him in the coming election. The representatives are to be elected the 10th of this month. He has sent to Colonel Weller five thousand dollars, but this is not sufficient to pay incidental expenses already incurred. God knows what will become of the U. S. Commission.

I shall go up to San Francisco by the next steamer and try *my* fortune for a short time. If I can make money rapidly I shall remain until spring, probably longer. If I do not like my new situation and the appearances of things, I shall return home forthwith.

I have no intelligence whatever from any of the Lancaster Boys except what I have already recited. Some of them no doubt have done well. But the men to make money in California are desperate characters like Myers who have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Their extravagant mode of speculating suits the times and the people.

Your Affect Bro:
R. P. Effinger

November 18th 1849
San Diego

Dear Brother Mike,
Never in my life have I so truly felt the true force of the expression "wide awake and full of fleas" as I have since my residence in California. Even now the little rascals keep my flesh crawling and so torment me that I can scarcely write. The whole country is full of fleas—go where you will and you will be infested with them. You may please add this as another very favorable reason for a permanent residence in this country.

The winter has now finally set in and the rainy season has commenced in earnest. It is hardly a fair representation of the winter here to say, "it rains." It neither *rains* here or at Panama according to the definition of that term at home, but it comes down pouring in torrents. There is also a great difference between a rain here and at Panama. In the latter place it rains without an effort, the heavens just seem to leak, the rain falls down in straight lines, not in drops, but in a stream about as thick as your finger. Here, however, it kicks up a great fuss, the wind comes booming and blustering from the Pacific and the large drops of rain fall upon you with as much violence as hailstones. It has been my singular bad fortune to ride for the last two days in a great rainstorm. I have often been anxious to see a shower of some kind here, but my curiosity is now perfectly satisfied. You may also add this as another happy feature in this land of promise. Oh: how I have longed for the cold, cracking, frosty mornings of Ohio, such mornings as would make us run jumping and shivering behind the kitchen stove.

In California there are no seasons. The climate and the temperature are the same the whole year round with the exception that during the months of November, December, January, and February it rains occasionally. One becomes about as tired of the monotony of the climate as he does of the sameness of the country. Well, I am at last about to bid farewell to this portion of the country. By the time this letter starts in the mail steamer for the States, I will be wending my way in another steamer for San Francisco in company with John B. Weller, Esq., H. H. Robinson, and a few more members of the commission. My connection with the commission is not yet dissolved. I am a little too smart to throw up a bird in the hand for two in the bush. I have a *leave of absence* (furlough) during which time my *full pay* goes on, to be forfeited in case I do not return. In any event I will be entitled to my transportation home, amounting to about five hundred dollars. My pay will more than cover my traveling expenses.

I shall go to San Francisco and there determine whether I shall remain in California longer than this winter. If I conclude to return home, I shall start by the 1st of January. It may be possible, unless Eddy has already set sail, that I shall go with him to Callao, there take the English steamer to Panama, thence home. I can write you no exact information now of my movements, as everything will be determined after my arrival at San Francisco. We are now daily looking for the steamer and as I am in the midst of my preparations for departure, you must excuse a short letter.

The election for the constitution, for governor, for lieutenant governor, for members of congress, for senators, and for members of assembly took place on the13th last. It is difficult to tell who will be elected, as the principal offices might depend upon the votes cast in the Sacramento and San Joaquin. I did not vote myself, nor take any part in the election, not wishing to relinquish my citizenship in Ohio for the glory of casting a vote here.

It was reported here last night by an express from the Pueblo de los Angeles that the brig *Frémont* was wrecked off the harbor of San Francisco and a hundred lives lost.

Many of the residents of San Diego who have been absent to the mining districts the past summer are now returning, all of them very well supplied with gold. I saw one person who since last fall had cleared and brought home with him $8,500; pretty good year's work that, somewhat better than a cabinet appointment. There is no concealing one fact that there is an immense sight of money found its way into this country by some means or other. It is strange to see with what perfect indifference a man will ask you fourteen dollars for a pair of coarse boots. By a regular mathematical computation I have arrived at the result that a dollar and fifty cents goes about as far out here as two bits (twenty-five cents) will at home. Money, therefore, ought to be plenty and wages high or a man would soon fall astern.

November 19th, 1849
Hide Houses, Harbor of San Diego

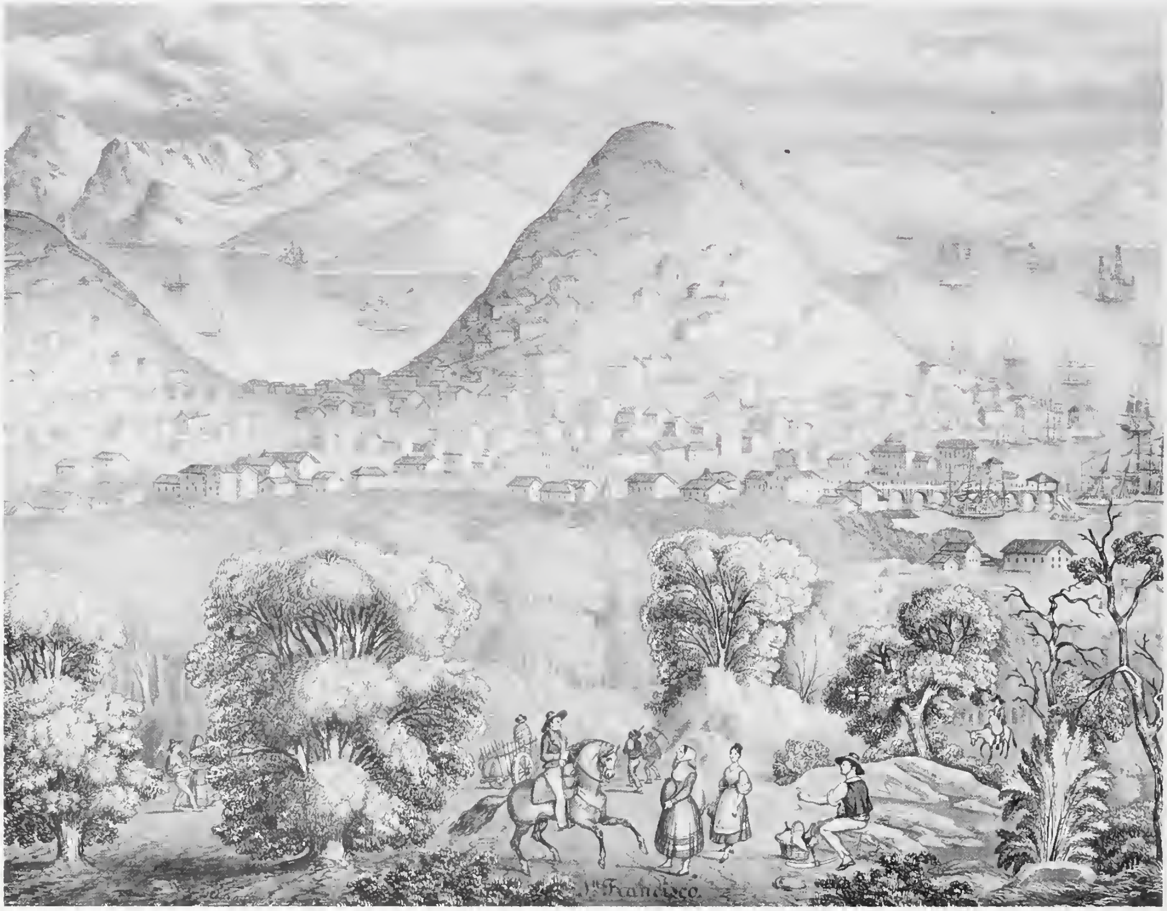
Dear Mike,
Here I am established in the same spot, in the same house, and writing on the **same table**, which Dana used while writing his *Two Years Before the Mast* patiently awaiting the arrival of the steamer from Panama (now past due) to take me to San Francisco.

Your Affect Bro
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATION

Table: The table Effinger used in the San Diego hide house might in fact have been the table used by Dana as he made notes in his journal for *Two Years Before the Mast*. His sailing adventure of 1834 to 1836, including four months spent ashore at San Diego curing hides, was actually written once he was back at Harvard and first published in 1840. The book was widely read, and was "almost the first, and for a long time the only, book about California" available to American readers.[56]

San Francisco


St Francisco.

This exaggeratedly bucolic scene provides a counterpoint to the noise and confusion Effinger observed when he arrived in San Francisco: "Never shall I forget the scene that I witnessed when I first came in sight of San Francisco. . . . The whole harbor seemed to be alive with boats and yawls of every description. When I landed at the long wharf (a kind of bridge running about six hundred yards in the sea), I was perfectly astonished at the immense crowd of people I saw. I sauntered into the city...filled with people—everybody on the move—running to and fro as if every moment was worth an ounce." *"Californie, vu de la ville de San Francisco,"* California Historical Society, FN-35925.

January 1st 1850
San Francisco

My Dear Sister,
I believe I have never as yet addressed you a letter personally, although in fact all the letters that I have written home are as much intended for one member of the family as another. If I have omitted to direct any of my letters to you, my excuse will be found in the fact, that the first and only letter that I have written from this truly wonderful place has been dedicated to you.

I left San Diego on the 28th of November in the steamship *Oregon* and arrived here on the 1st of December. I have never yet heard or seen an account published in reference to this place which in my estimation is correct or that will give any one a fair idea of its appearance. Book writers and letter scribblers generally commence a description of San Francisco by saying that it is in this latitude and that longitude and giving a geological or geographical account of the country. I propose to tell you, simply, what I have seen.

When you leave the ocean and enter the harbor of San Francisco it looks as if you were entering some noble river very much resembling the Hudson below West Point. This neck or river is some six miles in length. After rounding a point, Yerba Buena and the great range of vessels now lying in this harbor are visible. The location of the city is on a high bluff and can be seen to best advantage from the harbor or anchorage. Never shall I forget the scene that I witnessed when I first came in sight of San Francisco. You may tell brother John that the noise and confusion that we saw and heard on our memorable landing at New York was a child's rattle compared to this landing of mine at San Francisco. The whole harbor seemed to be alive with boats and yawls of every description—running out to our steamer for the purpose of carrying the passengers ashore. When I landed at the long wharf (a kind of bridge running about six hundred yards in the sea), I was perfectly astonished at the immense crowd of people I saw. Leaving my baggage in charge of my servant (who by the bye, I will tell you about directly), I sauntered into the city and soon found myself in the plaza or what is now called Portsmouth Square. All around me I noticed large buildings of frame that had evidently been just constructed, many in an unfinished state but crowded with carpenters and workmen of all kind. The plaza was filled with people—everybody on the move—running to and fro as if every moment was worth an ounce.

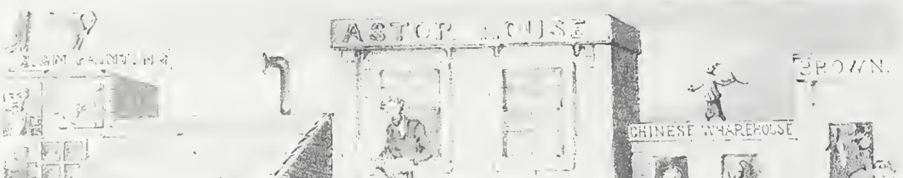
"And the mud —well this is a place what is muddy."

But the busiest man by far that I met on that public square was H. T. Myers Esq. or the Colonel, by which title he is more familiarly known here. I immediately enquired for quarters when he told me to bring my kit and baggage to *his* house—pointing out at the same time the most elegant mansion fronting the plaza. When I entered the house I found the basement to consist of a long, well-finished room, having on one side two ten-pin alleys, on the other a most elegant bar. The rest of the room occupied by gaming tables of every description, and the whole establishment under the charge and management of **Bill King** and **Phil Kramer**. On ascending the first story I found a large apartment decorated in the most princely and costly style: the floor carpeted with the finest Brussels carpet, splendid Turkey-damask curtains hanging in ample folds from the windows; the walls covered with rich gilded paper with fine chandeliers hanging from the ceiling. This I learned was the dining saloon. The front room on the same floor was as handsomely decorated but is used simply as a drinking saloon. The walls are covered with elegant engravings, large paintings, generally in a state of nudity. The painting over the bar represents Love sporting with the infant Bacchus and cost three thousand dollars. In fine the whole room is got up in a style far superior in style, elegance, and taste to any parlor in Lancaster.

The upper part of the house is divided off into rooms chiefly occupied as offices. Into one of these I was immediately installed and in less than two hours after I arrived at San Francisco, I had commenced the practice of law. This was doing up things with California rapidity. Upon taking a tour about the city, I found that all the public houses were finished with the same degree of extravagance and were generally used for gambling and drinking purposes. Throughout the day and the entire night these rooms are filled with all classes and conditions of men and women gambling and drinking in the greatest excess. At many of the tables you will find a pretty French, Spanish, or Italian girl dealing the popular game of monte. The noise and hurry, which you hear and see everywhere, equals if it does not surpass the confusion of Broadway in New York. This city of San Francisco is certainly hell broke loose and is truly the wonder of the world. It seems scarcely credible that in the short space of six months a large city with a population of at least 40,000 should have been constructed on this isolated spot. Human energy never accomplished so much in so short a space of time, and no one who has not been an actual eyewitness to the wonderful and rapid improvement made here can ever form a just conception of it.

As for myself, I commenced operations two hours after I landed at this place. I am now making about five hundred dollars per month. But my expenses are enormous. I pay $250 per month for my room, thirty-five dollars per week for my boarding. J. B. Hart pays $750 per month for his office. We are compelled to do everything here in the most extravagant style. My room is carpeted with fine Brussels carpet at six dollars per yard. My china table and escritoire cost seventy dollars. Every candle I burn costs one dollar, and everything else is about the same proportions. I am now a candidate before the legislature for the judgeship of the lower district of California including San Diego, Pueblo de los Angeles, San Pedro, and San Juan Capistrano and have now every chance of success. Salary: $4,000 per annum. I have made application for this office from the fact that I can't stand this climate. You can have no idea of what miserable weather we have here. It rains now incessantly. The very atmosphere we breathe is a thick heavy fog. And the mud—well this is a place *what* is muddy. You can't step over your doorsill without sinking ankle deep, and in many of the public streets a horse would mire. Just before I left Lancaster I bought of Bobby Reed a pair of high top boots that I have never taken out of my trunk till I arrived here. I thought at the time I had made a bad investment. At this moment I could get for them fifty dollars. What will Bobby say to that? Old Josey Monk would shed crocodile tears. In this country no one can form a just estimate of what one is making. A man may receive $10,000 per month, but if it takes all this sum to pay his monthly expenses I would like to know how much he is making. And this is pretty much the state of things in California. Everybody is receiving high prices, but it takes all this to meet daily expenses.

It is astonishing to see the vast amount of money that has found its way into this country. Every gambling house in the city (and these comprise the principal houses) is filled with tables groaning under the enormous weight of gold and silver. Thousands of dollars are passing hands every moment. A man would be laughed at who would think of betting a smaller sum than an ounce.



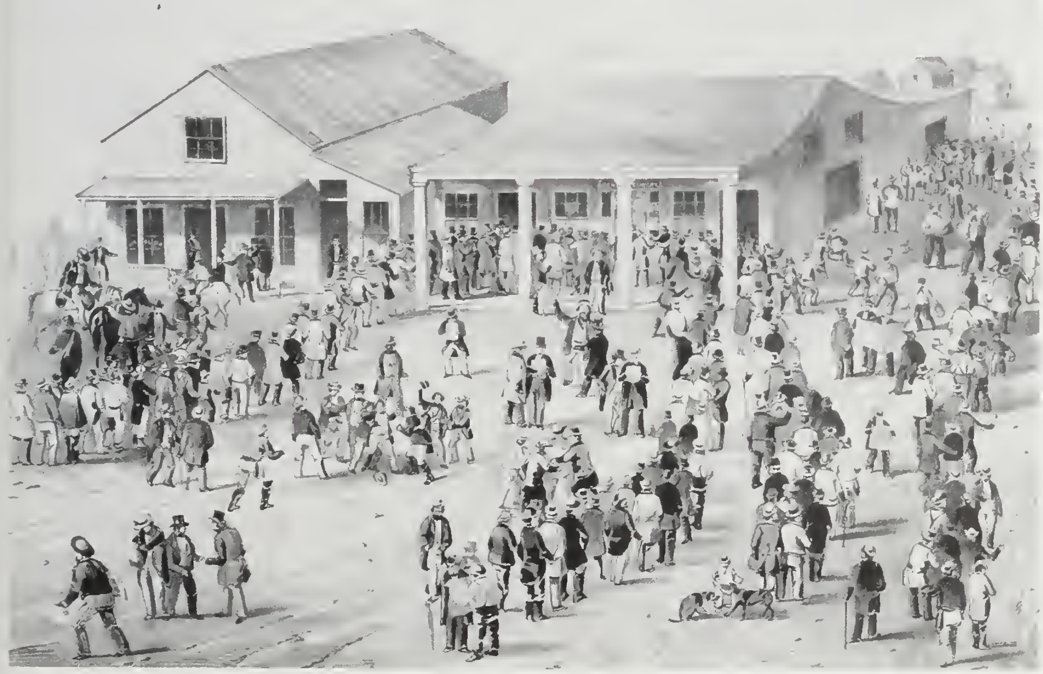
"I can't stand this climate. You can have no idea of what miserable weather we have here. It rains now incessantly. The very atmosphere we breathe is a thick heavy fog. And the mud—well this is a place what is muddy. You can't step over your doorsill without sinking ankle deep, and in many of the public streets a horse would mire." California Historical Society, FN-35951.

But while I think of it, I must give you a short account of my servant to whom I have already alluded in the former part of this letter. Sometime in the month of July, **Durivage**, the correspondent of the *New Orleans Picayune*, brought with him to San Diego by the overland route a black servant by the name of Lucas. Not having the means to take him on to San Francisco, he was compelled to leave him, and I employed him at Camp Riley in the affairs of the Commission. While he was under my charge, he got into a controversy with an Indian and killed him. The alcalde (who is a Mexican) had him tried and he was sentenced to be hung three hours after the commission of the crime. I remonstrated strongly against the hasty and summary proceedings of the alcalde, demanded a fair trial by jury, which was allowed, and succeeded in having him acquitted. Having saved his life Lucas now intends, whether I wish it or not, to spend it in my service. I think he is a runaway slave from South Carolina. He is a large, square-built fellow, quite a shrewd smart Negro, has been and I think will continue to be a very useful man to me. I am now receiving ten dollars per day for his wages, not including his personal attendance upon myself.

It is perfectly out of my powers of description to give you anything like a fair idea of matters and things in San Francisco. Every day is attended with so much excitement and so many novelties that one really becomes tired of its sameness. As I remarked before everything here *must*, in order to succeed, be done in the most extravagant style. To give you an idea of how well we live, I herewith enclose you a bill of fare with the prices affixed. Now this is the manner in which some people live. But look at the other side of the picture for a moment. While some of us are living in the greatest extravagance, by far the largest class of this population is living in abject poverty and the most miserable condition. It is indeed heart rending to see the amount of destitution and suffering that exists here among many of the emigrants. If a man once takes sick here, unless he has plenty of funds and friends, he is not only sure to die, but also have miserable death of it. Every day meetings are held and subscriptions taken to alleviate the distress of the poor and sick and many acts of commendable charity performed. I am perfectly surprised how well I keep my own health, for I never was so hearty in my life. My friends here scarcely know me, so handy and rugged I had grown and all of them envied my robust health.

It is still difficult with me to decide how long I shall remain in this country. I came here with the intention and expectation of making a small fortune at least in a small space of time. But the numerous failures I have seen dispose me to think that fortunes are as easily and rapidly made elsewhere as in California. I, however, have no reason to complain, for I have already made three times the amount of money which I would have made had I remained at home, but I wouldn't go through again what I have for three hundred times the amount. I have every prospect now of making money rapidly at my profession, in addition to this I may be elected district judge. At any rate I intend to stand my chances for a few months longer.

I shall send you this letter by Lieutenant Sherman, who goes home in the next steamer. Sherman has made some money in this country and had it not have been for his high sense of honor as an army officer, he would now be a millionaire.

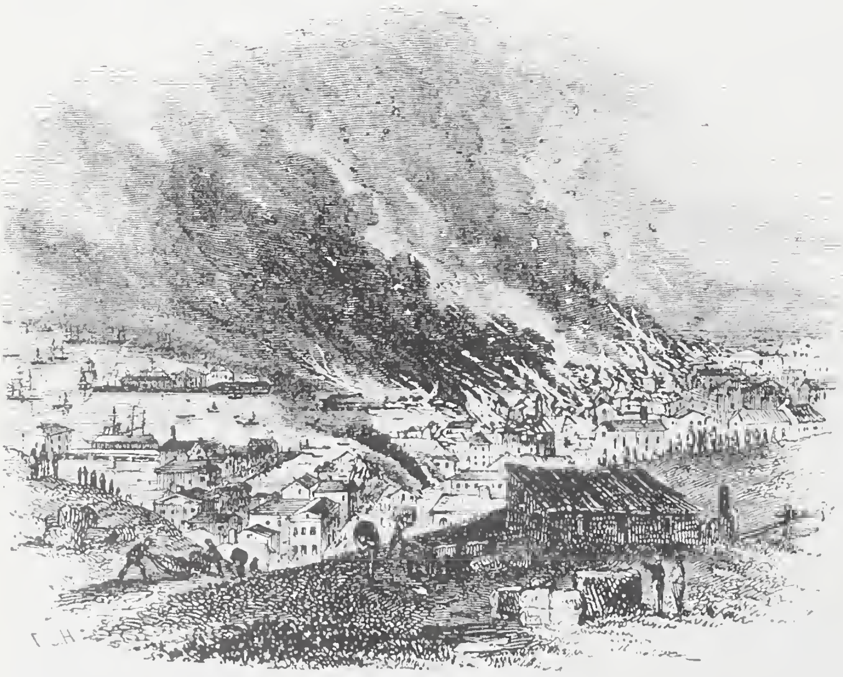


"There is always a constant and steady rush made to the office, making it perfectly impossible to get near the general delivery box short of two hours. I must confess that this news from home makes me homesick. One can't help contrasting the comforts and pleasures of old home to the cheerless and miserable state of things that surround you here." "A Faithful Representation of the Crowds Daily Applying at That Office for Letters & Newspapers," California Historical Society, FN-35936.

December 24th 1849
[January 1st 1850]

I have dated my letter January 1st because the steamer leaves on that day, but in point of date I am now writing to you on the 24th of December, Christmas Eve. I am compelled to scribble to you in snatches just as I have time, and I don't wonder that my letters lack interest. What a jolly time folks must be having at home. It seems to me that I can smell the Christmas cakes a-baking. What devil of a time the little chaps at home will have tomorrow running round collecting their gifts and shooting pop guns and crackers. Well, I would just like to be there long enough to collect a crowd of little shavers around me and throw a handful of gold dust in the air and see them scramble for it.

Alas! Christmas Eve is a sorrowful time to many of the property holders in San Francisco. This morning at about four o'clock we were all startled from our sleep by the alarming cry of **fire! fire! fire!** It was an awful cry to hear in this close-built wooden city, where there was neither engine, hook, nor ladder nor anything to extinguish a fire and where men won't perform any kind of labor unless they are well paid. The fire originated in the back part of the Dennison House fronting the public plaza and carried away nearly all the best and principal houses to the edge of the harbor. The Parker House, El Dorado, our house and a whole street of stores were burnt to the ground in less than three hours, and had not a number of houses been blown up by powder, the whole city would have been burnt to ashes. I have heard no estimate made of the loss, but I think it cannot be less than two millions of dollars. It was one of the grandest and yet at the same time one of the most painful sights I ever witnessed. To see a whole block of buildings, which were erected in this city at the most enormous prices, wrapped in flames and the fire rapidly spreading from house to house without the means of arresting its progress or save the great amount of valuable personal property contained therein was indeed a distressing sight and made us all feel that we would soon be houseless exposed to the incessant rains and inclemency of this climate. But thanks to gunpowder and the personal exertions of a few citizens, the fire was stopped.



"Alas! Christmas Eve is a sorrowful time to many of the property holders in San Francisco. This morning at about four o'clock we were all startled from our sleep by the alarming cry of fire! fire! fire! It was an awful cry to hear in this close-built wooden city, where there was neither engine hook nor ladder nor anything to extinguish a fire and where men won't perform any kind of labor unless they are well paid." California Historical Society, Fine Arts Collection.

Dec. 25th: No Christmas here, just as I expected. Men can't afford to shut up their business houses and enjoy holy days here; it costs too much money. Plenty of persons got gloriously drunk and ate big dinners, but these are everyday occurrences. Today I received from the post office two letters, one from Brother Mike, the other from Joe Kinkead, both dated in August. I got these two letters by the merest accident. A friend of mine in the post office happened to be turning over some official documents made up for San Diego and tumbled upon them and immediately brought them to me. This is the only way you can conveniently receive letters here. There is always a constant and steady rush made to the office, making it perfectly impossible to get near the general delivery box short of two hours. I must confess that this news from home makes me homesick. One can't help contrasting the comforts and pleasures of old home to the cheerless and miserable state of things that surround you here. Not a day passes over our head but what we hear of a suicide, a murder, or theft. The police force are constantly increasing, but it will require a stronger and more numerous police here than they have in New York to preserve the peace and quiet of the city and afford protection to the lives and persons of individuals. Not a night passes over our head but some man is either killed or severely wounded in some of the public houses of the city. No man whose duty or business calls him to visit these houses of public resort can consider his life safe. Altercations are constantly occurring between parties about a gambling table, where out fly their Colt revolvers and an innocent man is just as likely to be killed as the guilty. For they generally pull away at random until every shot is discharged. Every day and night this city presents the scene of some great national race course, where gambling, drinking, and shooting is carried on in an extensive way and where men seem to live only for the gratification of their passions. The winter has just fairly set in. The crowd of persons congregated on this spot, from every portion of the globe, representing every nation and climate, will be compelled to remain here until spring. Ships loaded with passengers are daily arriving, provisions are becoming scarce, sickness is increasing, and labor decreasing. What scenes of suffering and distress, what outrages upon society will not be committed in the next two months!!!

The Legislature is now in session. **Frémont** and **Gwin** are elected to the U.S. Senate. There are but two Whigs in the legislature—H. H. Robinson is now at San José, a candidate for state printer. As soon as the legislature commences districting the state, I shall be on the ground urging my claims to the judgeship etc.

Tomorrow I start for San José, the capital of the state, in company with **Judge Hastings**, chief justice of the Supreme Court, to try my chances for the judgeship of the Lower district of California. I shall inform you of my success on my return.

Yours affectionately
R. P. Effinger

ANNOTATIONS

Bill King and **Philip Kramer**, who were managing Henry Myer's's gaming parlor, were both Lancaster Boys. Kramer had been one of the major cascading fellows on the *Alabama*, steaming from New Orleans to Chagres with Effinger and the Weller Commission staff (see page 14). King traveled overland to California as reported by Effinger.[57] Effinger conveyed sorry news of fall-out from the Meyers scandal by which Kramer and King "were both crushed in Meyer's ruin . . . they both endorsed him for about $1,000."[58]

John E. Durivage, who had only recently arrived in San Diego after an arduous overland journey via the Gila Route, described the Fourth of July celebration in which the Boundary Commission personnel played a prominent role, as well as sending other dispatches back to New Orleans.

The **Portsmouth Square fire** on Christmas Eve 1849 was just the first of a half-dozen great fires in the next two years. [59]

William McKendree Gwin (1805–1885) was California's first U.S. Senator, elected by the legislature. Born and educated in Tennessee as a lawyer and physician, he served as a congressional representative from Mississippi before settling in San Francisco in 1849, as so many other office-seekers did. He served in the Senate from 1850 to 1855 and from 1857 to 1861. **John Charles Frémont** (1813–1890) filled California's first short term in the Senate (September 1850 to March 1851), after which he traveled to Europe, promoted railroads, ran for the presidency (1856), fought in the Civil War, and served as governor of Arizona Territory (1878–1883).

Serranus Clinton Hastings (1814–1893), California's first chief justice, founded and endowed Hastings College of Law in San Francisco in 1878. Born in New York, he entered the Indiana bar, then moved to Iowa and served in the legislature there and as Iowa's first Congressional representative. A forty-niner to California, he stepped up to the supreme court the next year.

January 12, 1850
San Francisco

Dear Mike,
I returned from San José yesterday. The day my arrival there I was taken with a violent attack of intermittent fever which confined me to my bed seven days. Very fortunately for me old Dr. Chamberlin was there, and he at last succeeded in breaking my fever.

I found two opposing candidates, both of whom are members of the assembly, and one your old friend or I hope I may more truly say your acquaintance, Oliver S. Witherby. When Witherby was run for the legislature, it was distinctly understood between him and myself that I would be a candidate for the judgeship and in case of his election was to receive his support. But no sooner does he become comfortably fixed in his seat, than he concludes to become a candidate himself. I feel perfectly confident, however, that he stands no chance of success. The election will not come off for two or three weeks yet, and the race will be between Mr. Taft, the member from San Luis Obispo, and myself. The salary of this office will be about eight thousand dollars per annum instead of four, the sum I mentioned in my last letter.

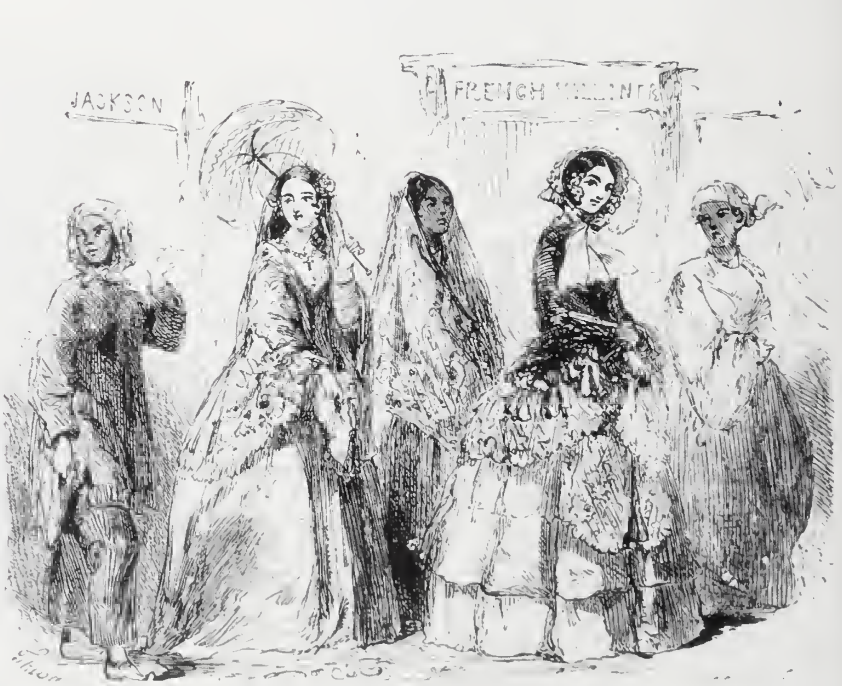
On the steamer *California*, which leaves here on the 15th, Jim Miers, Simon Baker, and Jim Miller will return home, all of them disgusted with this country. Should I not be elected judge I may return home on the next steamer. I have firmly concluded in my own mind not to remain in this part of the country—no man, I care not which kind of a constitution he may have, can remain in this part of California without impairing his health. Should I receive the office I have applied for, I will live in one of the healthiest countries in the known world and will make in the course of two years not less than twenty thousand dollars, a very snug sum to take home with me.

From the fact that I have been compelled to electioneer a good deal, I have not been able to attend to any kind of business with any degree of regularity and have necessarily been at great expense. Should I return home soon, you won't find me with a pocket full of rocks.

By the way H. H. Robinson has been elected state printer. This ought to make his fortune, and I have no doubt it will.

Jesse B. Hart has frequently applied to me to go in his office; I have been compelled to decline his proposition, as my stay in San Francisco depends upon the contingency of this judgeship affair. Since my return from San José, he has again applied to me, and I have nearly concluded to go into his office, with the distinct understanding, however, that if I am elected I leave.

By the last steamer I wrote a long letter to Sister Mary. Things here have not changed much since the date of that letter. If in anything, it rains harder, the fog is denser, and the mud is deeper.



"The rarest commodity in this market at this time is women. A great many of this class of humankind are wending their ways to our hospitable shores, and I have no doubt that by next fall our market will be overstocked with them. . . . The cities of New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans are pouring . . . their prostituted population into our market—and no other class of women ought to think of coming here for the present." "San Francisco Beauties—the Celestial, the Señora, and Madame" California Historical Society, FN-35952.

What a miserable place San Francisco is! The city of Sacramento has been overflowed and is now about ten feet under water. It is estimated that over three millions of property has been destroyed. A great many of the inhabitants have fled to this city. The distress and suffering among those who were fortunate enough to reach high ground is beyond description. I saw John O. Fall last night. His entire stock of goods is under water. Although his loss will be considerable, he says it will not embarrass him. Everybody has predicted a big smash in this city, and I think it has commenced. Not a day passes by but some establishment passes from the hands of the original owners into the care and custody of the sheriff. You can tell Mother we have no "nine day wonders" here, but "everyday wonders" are frequent.

Yours affectionately
R. P. Effinger

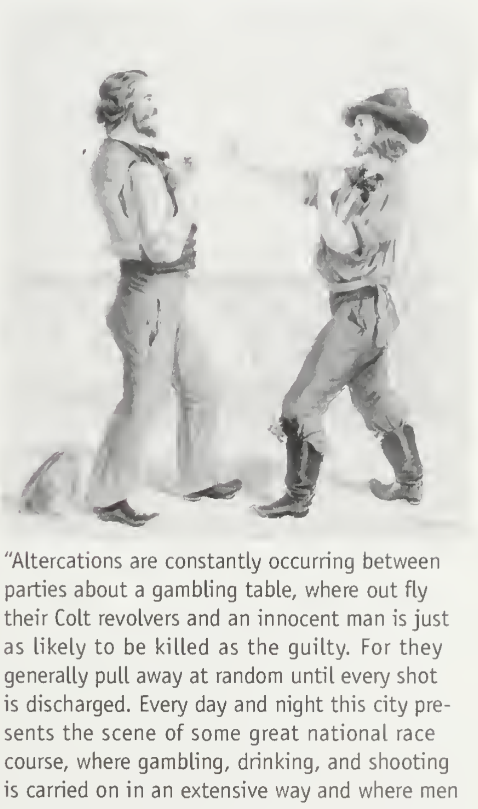
January 29th 1850
San Francisco

My Dear Mother,
Everything in San Francisco remains about the same. Commercial men reporting for the markets say, that money is *tight*. But I see a great many men who are a good deal tighter (now Pudding Weaver might think this is a good pun). The rain pours down so incessantly, the streets are so muddy, the city is crowded, rents are so high, and provisions are so scarce, that such a thing as a real comfort cannot be found. The persons who have taken up their winter quarters in the mines are unable to do scarcely anything in consequence of the high waters. Very few are ever able to pay their daily expenses, I heard from Tom Wilson today. He is quartered at Weaver Creek. They have not been able to do much this winter but console themselves that in the coming summer they will reap rich harvest.

Ferguson and Rice are now in this city. They propose returning to the mines as soon as the weather will permit. You can hire good laboring men in the city for two dollars per day. This is not enough to feed them. A great many will go up to the mines the coming spring, unable to procure work here, and not having money enough to take them home, they are forced to go into the mines. Not a day passes by but what we are informed of some man who has committed suicide and generally through fear of starvation. If I had sufficient descriptive powers to give you a truthful and faithful account of this city, you could not give credit to my statements. Should I have time between this and the sailing of the next steamer, I will try my hand at it. Bedlam must have been a fool compared to this place. The only persons who are now making money in California are lawyers, bankers, commission merchants, and speculators in land. The gamblers have had a rich harvest but their fortunes are rather fluctuating.

Give my best love to sister Mary—to Mike & Elmyra—to John & Maggie—and believe me—if I don't most heartily wish I was at home eating some of your nice cornbread and ham with some of Mrs. Miller's fresh butter & eggs then my name ain't----

Pat. Effinger



"Altercations are constantly occurring between parties about a gambling table, where out fly their Colt revolvers and an innocent man is just as likely to be killed as the guilty. For they generally pull away at random until every shot is discharged. Every day and night this city presents the scene of some great national race course, where gambling, drinking, and shooting is carried on in an extensive way and where men seem to live only for the gratification of their passions." *"Argumentos sólidos,"* California Historical Society, FN-35931.

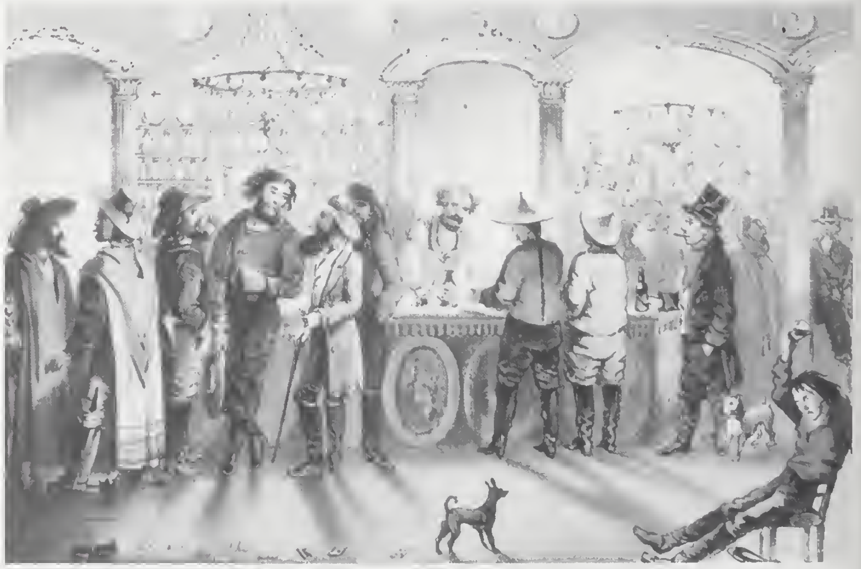
March 1st, 1850
San Francisco

Dear Brother Mike,

Suppose you just take my arm and imagine to yourself that it is about four o'clock in the evening and that you are strolling around with me to see the sights of the city. We will commence with the corner of Portsmouth Square and first step into the El Dorado. After pushing and jamming your way through the crowd, you find we are in a large room about sixty feet deep and twenty feet wide. A bar runs the whole length of the establishment and is as elegantly and tastefully fitted up as any of the bars in the Eastern cities. The whole back of the bar is walled up with large mirrors and beautiful pictures. You can't fail to be pleased with the four representations of French **grisettes** hanging up in the El Dorado as large as life. They are precisely such images as you have had in your mind while reading **Eugène Sue**. Well, after you get done admiring yourself in the large mirror and take another long look at the pretty, cunning, saucy-looking French grisettes, we'll take a little something to drink. Considering the dampness of the climate I'll not take anything stronger than a hot Scotch whiskey punch, but you can call for what you like—for let me remind you that here they stir up every drink in the known world together with a few that are peculiar to this country. If Bill Latta, now, only had a sup of my hot punch he would certainly come to the conclusion that here they have whiskey what is whiskey.

In this room they have about six monte tables, two roulette tables, two **faro banks** and two **vingt-et-un** tables. The monte tables have the largest banks varying from ten to twenty thousand dollars. This larger amount of money is very tastefully and curiously set out on their tables. They will have a tier of dollars about three inches high arranged in the shape of a diamond or parallelogram—and then cap the tier with Mexican ounces. On top of this they place the California and American coin of ten and five dollar gold pieces. The whole is then topped off with bars and large specimens of gold. These tables are crowded from morning till the short hours of night with persons betting every amount from one dollar to three thousand. This room is crowded from morning till night with persons representing nearly every nation under the sun. You will see persons from every part of Mexico and South America and the Pacific Islands. Add to these the English, French, German, Italian, Chinese and you have a jargon something after the fashion of Babel, and a variety of persons something after the style of Walter Bruns Geography.

We will now step into the Dennison Exchange. This room is somewhat larger than the El Dorado and a little more crowded. You will here find the same splendor in the arrangement of this bar—beautiful pictures and large mirrors. Gambling tables of every description are spread throughout the room, each one crowded by a throng of eager betters. The most remarkable thing in this room is an eccentric Dutch fiddler and a curious kind of clock. The fiddler is a real **Paganini** of a player—executing the most difficult pieces of music in a masterly style, but the clock I



"Dear Brother Mike—Suppose you just take my arm and imagine to yourself that you are strolling around with me to see the sights of the city. We will . . . first step into the El Dorado. A bar runs the whole length of the establishment and is as elegantly and tastefully fitted up as any of the bars in the Eastern cities. . . . Well, after you get done admiring yourself in the large mirror, we'll take a little something to drink. You can call for what you like—for here they stir up every drink in the known world together with a few that are peculiar to this country." California Historical Society, FN 12933.

think beats him, for it not only keeps regular time, as every good clock ought to do, but discourses most eloquent music and at the same time by a peculiar arrangement of the machinery has a whole lot of blacksmiths at work. In every corner of its face you see a blacksmith shoeing a horse and the way he drives in the nails and pains the hoof would be a matter of some considerable astonishment to Bennet Garnet himself. In another corner of the face while our fellow is blowing the bellows, two other blacksmiths are welding on the anvil two pieces of red-hot-iron. The whole thing is certainly an ingenious contrivance.

We will now take a peep into **Crockford**s—another drinking and gambling saloon named after a great coffee house in London. This room is still larger than the last and contains many more gambling tables. At one end of the room sitting on a rostrum are four Spaniards playing the national and popular airs of this country on the harp and guitars. And while the harmony and melody of some sweet yet melancholy air will make you think of friends and home, the jingle of the gold and silver on the gambler's table will remind you of this matter of fact and dollar world. They make a good brandy cocktail here and as we are a little draughty, let's take a pop.

Now let's hurry away from the fumes of liquor, the almost suffocating smoke of cigarettos, pipes, and segars and once more get in the pure air. We walk in to Bryants Exchange, formerly the Ward House, the seat of Myer's meteoric splendor and infamy. This house has been repaired and fitted up in still more elegant style than the description I gave in my last letter home. No gambling is allowed in this establishment, and it is really a relief to walk into some house of public resort where you can be rid of the everlasting jingle of money—and where you can meet intelligent gentlemen reading the news or quietly discussing the ordinary topics of the day. This house is as well kept as any of the hotels in the Eastern cities. As you may be a little hungry by this time, suppose we step up to the other end of the room where you see that pretty girl selling confectionaries and pastries of all kinds. Theo Tallmadge would be at home here for he could cram his guts with an endless variety of sweetmeats, but in order to do so he would have to have his pockets crammed with rocks. It is just in such places as these that they rigorously adhere to California prices.

We will now make an attempt to get into the Empire, and really this house is as much the empire of houses as New York is the empire of cities. The room is about 120 feet by 50 feet and although so large, the most elegant and tasty room in town. They have an orchestra band playing the whole time. The room is filled with all kinds of gambling tables and a bar which in extent and appearance is far ahead of the celebrated bar of the Saint Charles at New Orleans. The bar of the Saint Charles is rented for ten thousand dollars a year, and I used to think that this was a most enormous price to pay for such a privilege. But the (bar at the) Empire of San Francisco rents for ten thousand dollars a month. The wall is lined with the most beautiful paintings, engravings, and pictures. But the crowd here is a little too promiscuous, too much smoke and jamming against dirty Mexicans so we will vamoose to Garricks Head. This is the favorite resort of the best class of foreigners, English, French, and Spaniards. I must call your attention to that pretty black-eyed Creole standing behind the bar and in order to have a better view of her,

"Here they stir up every drink in the known world. . . . and a few that are peculiar to this country."

we'll get her to make us a **Tom and Jerry**. All the drinking saloons of the City have adopted this custom of placing pretty, saucy looking, active girls behind their bars.

But we haven't time to stay here long—for there is the Haley House, the Saint Charles, the Bella Union, the Miners Exchange, the Parker Pavilion, the United States, and a host of other first-class establishments which we have yet to visit. But for the present (as you are no doubt tired, as I am sickened with this detail) let it suffice that while all these houses are opened for the one common purpose of drinking and gambling—yet there is an endless variety in the manner of their arrangement—and let a stranger once go through the scenes which one daily and nightly enacted in this City and he will come to the same common conclusion that no place in the world presents such a profusion of—what the devotee of pleasure calls the luxuries of the world. Nowhere in the world has Bacchus so many notaries—nowhere has dissipation in all its forms such freedom and wide scope. Why the Law here does not only permit what in our state is either considered penal or criminal—but absolutely sanctions it. A gambler has not only the right to gamble in the most public places of this city, but he has the legal right to go into our first judicial courts and compel you by the strong arm of the law to pay him the money he may have won. It is from this kind of establishments that the City derives its principal revenue. Every gambler pays into the city treasury fifty dollars a month for his privilege, and he has therefore the same rights, and everyone dealing with him lays himself under the same obligations as if he were transacting business with a broker regularly licensed or any privileged corporation.

"The only persons . . . now making money in California are lawyers, bankers, commission merchants, and speculators in land."

Although this city offers every inducement and temptation to those who are fond of dissipation and excess, yet a more orderly, quiet, and well regulated city can't be found anywhere in the States. If drinking is dissipation, everybody in California dissipates, but they very seldom commit excesses. But we are not quite through with the amusements yet. For there are the Olympic and National Theatres, the former an amphitheatre, after the style of the one on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia, the latter on the style of the French Theatre at New Orleans and both are very well supported. The Olympic presents a scene of Equestrian and theatrical performances, while the stage of the National is graced with pretty French dancing girls, pantomimes, vaudevilles, and songs. It only takes four dollars to get in and about that much to get out—but eight or ten dollars in this country ain't anything.

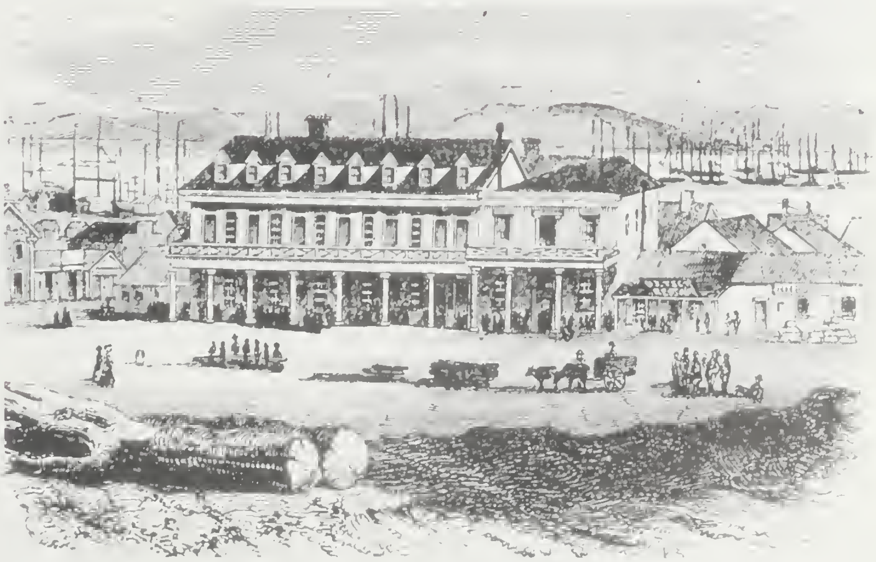
We will now take a Bo-peep at the business houses. Since my arrival here large business houses have been erected and although they are made of rather light material they are finished off with a considerable degree of elegance and taste. The banking houses are the finest: what a display they make to the avaricious eyes of the gold hunter, with their great huge lumps of gold, and pounds of dust lying alongside the window! These bankers are the chaps that are making the money. They can readily invest all their money for ten and fifteen per cent a month and that too to good men and on the best security. The commission houses and auction houses here do a great business—and mock auctions are becoming as numerous as they are in New York. Many a poor fellow is Peter Funkid before he is an hour old in this city. But I find it impossible to give you anything like a connected account of our city so I ramble on.

The rarest commodity in this market at this time is women. A great many of this class of humankind are wending their ways to our hospitable shores and I have no doubt that by next fall our market will be overstocked with them. The class of women now emigrating here are from Sydney, New South Wales, the place where England sends her convicts and redundant population. The captain of a ship will frequently bring a whole cargo of girls from Sydney—from forty to eighty—to this port, and when they arrive here sell them out to pay their passage. I say sell them out because it is virtually selling them. They are too poor to pay their passage . . . for the space of three or six months. So that any man who can raise from sixty to one hundred dollars can buy himself a tolerable good-looking white girl. I wonder what Deacon Slade will say to this. These women were absolutely sold at public auction and only brought fifteen dollars each. The cities of New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans are pouring a portion of their prostituted population into our market—and no other class of women ought to think of coming here for the present. Why I heard with the greatest surprise that Mr. Hart had sent for his family. I would much prefer that a wife of mine should board in a respectable bawd house in the city of New York than live anywhere in the city of San Francisco.

The policy of our city now is rather on the standstill order. The fact is property holders are looking for a sudden and terrible crash here, and it behooves all who want to save their bacon to stand from under. Real estate has fallen twenty-five percent in the last six weeks and rents about fifty percent. Property will go down, down, down, just as certain as water will flow back into the channel after an overflow. You hear people complaining of the tightness of the money market. You see business stagnate—then heavy dealers fail, and all the premonitory symptoms of a morbid state of things. To give the diagnosis would require one more skilled in political economy than I am. But the great part of our populations is rushing towards the mines. Within the last two weeks not less than one thousand persons have left this city for the different placers. The tide of emigration is throwing hundreds every day into our city. What a place of business—of wild and reckless excitement is San Francisco!

And now lastly to speak about myself. I never enjoyed better health—but have frequently been much better contented. I have made a great deal of money since my arrival here at San Francisco, but have very foolishly spent a great deal. I expect, however, during the coming summer and fall to make all the money that California owes me and by that time you may expect me home. I am now making more in a month than I ever made at home in a year. Sometime during the coming summer I intend to spend a month traveling through the mines merely for the purpose of seeing them. I shall try and dig enough gold to make you all a handsome present. The election for district judges has not come off yet. My last [information] from San José show a good many competitors on the track. I would have no doubt of my success could I remain at the capital and urge my claims—but as it is I think my chances rather doubtful. However, I don't care a tuppence about it one way or the other.

Your affectionate Bro:
R. P. Effinger



"We will now step into the Dennison Exchange. This room is somewhat larger than the El Dorado and a little more crowded. You will here find the same splendor in the arrangement of this bar—beautiful pictures and large mirrors. Gambling tables of every description are spread throughout the room, each one crowded by a throng of eager bettors." "Dennison's Exchange and Parker House before the fire, December, 1849" in *The Annals of San Francisco* by Frank Soule, John H. Gihon, M.D., and James Nisbet. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1855. California Historical Society, North Baker Research Library; FN-35950.

ANNOTATIONS

Eugène Sue (pen name of Marie Joseph Sue, 1804–1857), whose novels, including *The Mysteries of Paris*, published in 1842 and 1843, drew graphic pictures of the wild side of Parisian life. He used the term "**grisettes**" in describing the courtesan Rigolette in the *Mysteries*.

Faro and **vingt-et-un**: The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines faro as "A gambling game at cards, in which the players bet on the order in which certain cards will appear when taken singly from the top of the pack." Vingt-et-un (or vingt-un), meaning "twenty-one," or what is frequently called "blackjack," is defined as "A round game of cards in which the object is to make the number twenty-one or as near this as possible without exceeding it, by counting the pips on the cards, court-cards counting as ten, the ace one or eleven as the holder chooses."

According to Bancroft, "The chief games were faro, preferred by Americans and Britons; monte, beloved of the Latin race, roulette, rouge-et-noir, rondo, vingt-et-un, paire-ou-non, trente-et-quarante, and chuck-a-luck with dice. The stakes ranged usually between fifty cents and five dollars, but rose frequently to $500 and $1,000, while amounts as high as $45,000 are spoken of as being risked upon the turn of a card."[60]

Virtuoso master violinist **Nicolo Paganini** (1782–1840) was most famous for his astonishing accomplishments as a musician. He was also known as a gambler, however, and was unsuccessful when he opened his own casino in Paris in 1838. After its failure, he moved on to Marseilles, and then to Nice, where he died.

The original **Crockfords** in Mayfair calls itself "the oldest and most celebrated gaming house in the world, playing host to celebrated clients in opulent surroundings since 1828."[61]

Do try a **Tom and Jerry** at home if you're feeling like living dangerously—and historically: "Made with just about any ardent spirit—bourbon, rye, or brandy and rum—this hot grog can be mixed in a batch with 12 eggs, 3 tablespoons simple syrup, and milk or water. Labor-intensive and loathed by most bartenders, this drink is best made in the privacy of one's home."[62]

April 29th 1850
San Francisco

My Dear Mother,

It may be as I have often heard Charley Jones say, that it was an unlucky thing for me that I was born in the month of March. I have not the time now, however, to discuss the question whether my character in fickleness assimilates to that month or not. I desire simply to inform you that on tomorrow I go on board of a schooner to sail for **Humboldt Harbor** and Trinidad Bay situated about three hundred miles north of this city. If you ask me why I am going I can say in reply, that I told you when quite a little boy that by the time I arrived at thirty years of age you should ride in a fine carriage as independent as any of your neighbors, and I believe that I am now going to the place where I can rapidly accumulate the means to accomplish this object. If with the proceeds of my labor here in California I can procure for you one of the finest farms and snug little countryseats in the county of old Fairfield, I shall be fully satisfied and shall have obtained the principal object of my expedition.

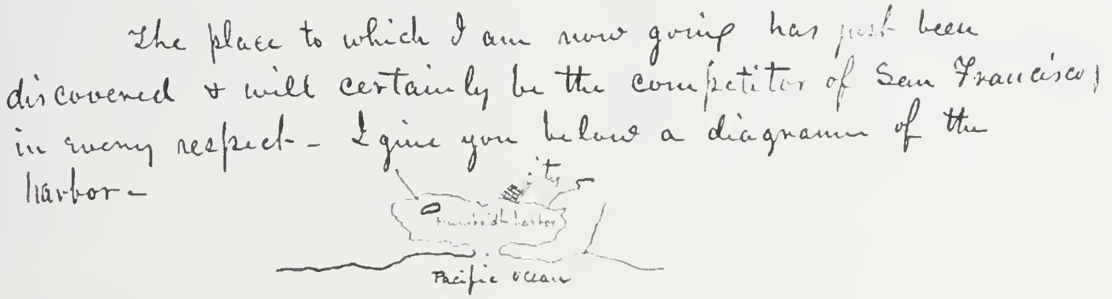
The place to which I am now going has just been discovered and will certainly be the competitor of San Francisco in every respect. I give you below a diagram of the harbor. This harbor is eighteen miles long, five miles wide and one-quarter mile wide at the entrance. It is situated about thirty-five miles from the "diggins" on Trinity River, which are by far the richest that have been discovered in this country. The country around the bay is most beautiful and it certainly bids fair to be the finest position in California.

I am simply going there now on an experimental trip. My business will still continue in this city, and if I feel convinced on my arrival at Humboldt Harbor that it won't pay I shall return immediately to this place.

You must excuse the very short letter at this time as every moment of my time is taken up with my preparations for leaving. I expect to be appointed secretary of the company who originally discovered this important place and will be their principal attorney.

Direct my letters to San Francisco as usual. Give my love to all and may God bless and preserve your health.

Your Affectionate Son,
R. P. Effinger



The place to which I am now going has just been discovered & will certainly be the competitor of San Francisco, in every respect — I give you below a diagram of the harbor —

City
Humboldt harbor
Pacific Ocean

"Tomorrow I go on board of a schooner to sail for Humboldt Harbor. . . . The place to which I am now going has just been discovered and will certainly be the competitor of San Francisco in every respect. I give you below a diagram of the harbor. . . . It is situated about thirty-five miles from the 'diggins' on Trinity River, which are by far the richest that have been discovered in this country. The country around the bay is most beautiful and it certainly bids fair to be the finest position in California." Sketch by R. P. Effinger, letter of April 29, 1850.

ANNOTATION

Humboldt Harbor: Effinger's last letter, about going to Humboldt Bay as attorney for town speculators there, is accompanied in CHS 643 by documents giving him power of attorney for Charles B. Young in San Francisco, one of a number of men who hoped to develop and profit from Humboldt in the Laura Virginia Company. Other correspondence from Young to Effinger at Humboldt Bay contains announcements of the impending arrival of two iron house kits that were to be assembled on lots as models, and instructions about selling staple items to settlers and remitting the prophets to Young for reinvestment. Unfortunately, there is no correspondence from Effinger that would indicate his success or any observations concerning the new town of Humboldt.

Young had come to California as a lieutenant with the First Regiment of New York Volunteers, sent to California in 1846. Famously comprised of a group of opportunists and adventurers, there were also many reputable men in the group. Stevenson's Regiment, as the force was known, was raised for duty in the Mexican-American War with the understanding that men would remain as settlers in California following service. Among the speculators in Humboldt besides Young was Joseph L. Folsom, who was a captain and assistant quartermaster of the regiment, and became a major ranchero in Sacramento County.[63] Other men with a stake in the property Effinger represented at Humboldt Bay were: W. H. Gallagher, W. I. Whitney, James M. Crane, Robert S. Lamott, W. A. Shaw, and Fayette Clapp (husband of Louise Amelia Knapp Smith Clappe, author of the classic *Shirley Letters*), and his brother Alfred Clapp.[64]

Effinger's glowing enthusiasm was like that of others caught in the swirl of big talk and bigger hopes for a new port and commercial metropolis to serve mines up the Trinity River. Inexact geographical knowledge and competing claims characterized a number of expeditions and would-be developments, including the *Laura Virginia*, which was the first ship to enter both Trinidad and Humboldt Bays, in early April 1850. Douglas Ottinger, on furlough from the U.S. revenue service, was captain of the ship, and when he entered Humboldt Bay on April 9, he assumed it to be his discovery, and he called it Humboldt and founded the town.[65]

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R E V I E W S

Edited by
James J. Rawls

Books sent to *California History* for review that are not reviewed, but pertain to the collection, are catalogued in the California Historical Society, North Baker Research Library.

The Gold Rush Diary of Ramón Gil Navarro

By Ramón Gil Navarro,
edited and translated by
Maria del Carmen Ferreyra and
David S. Reher (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.
305 pp., $50 cloth.)

Reviewed by Michael J. Gonzalez,
associate professor of history,
University of San Diego

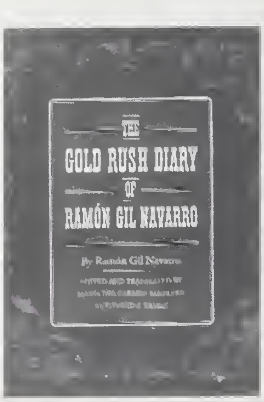
The reader who has perused the published diaries of William Perkins, J. D. Borthwick, and other Argonauts may groan when Ramón Gil Navarro's account lands on the desk. Is there really a need for another diary from the California Gold Rush? Indeed, there is, for Navarro's reminiscence deserves notice. Navarro is one of the few Spanish-speaking miners whose personal account has made it into print. (Antonio Coronel, a resident of Los Angeles who also sought his fortune in the diggings, is the only other Spanish speaker to see his words translated and published.)

Born and raised in Argentina, Navarro and his family fled to Chile in 1845 to escape the tyrant Juan Manuel Rosas. But Concepción, the town where the family settled, promised a dull existence for young Navarro. He joined a Chilean mining company after hearing about the gold strikes, and in 1849, at the age of twenty-two, he sailed to California where he remained for three years. Once in the diggings, Navarro recorded his thoughts in a diary. Like other commentators who headed to the diggings, he complained about the miners' violent conduct and marveled at the effort one needed to hit pay dirt.

Navarro differed from many of his contemporaries by often dwelling on private, intimate matters. A man of wide learning—during his stay in California he owned at least sixty-five books ranging from history to literature—Navarro possessed the knowledge and sensitivity to describe his emotions. At times he played the philosopher when boasting about his attributes. After admiring how a barber cut his "beautiful hair," Navarro exulted that "art" cannot make things "beautiful when they are already beautiful to begin with."

Navarro turned more descriptive when he surveyed his longings and desires. He mourned when the woman of his dreams decided to wed another man. The news cursed him, he said, with a feeling of "torture and surprise." In another instance, Navarro visited a brothel so he could "see everything at least once in my life." His yearnings sometimes prompted him to make bold admissions. When staying in the San Francisco home of a friend, Navarro heard a man and woman slip into a room adjacent to his. Curious about their intentions, Navarro put his ear against the wall to catch the "little lies and promises that lovers exchange."

These adventures in love and intimacy make Navarro's diary read like literature. After all, a fine poem or work of fiction presents individuals in all their complexity. At once noble or craven, the characters of any literary effort encourage readers to study the compulsions that make up human nature. Navarro, therefore, while describing how temptation tugged at his spirit, provides a perspective that cannot be ignored. When bending close to study his words and learn of his experiences, we may see not only Navarro's face, but our own.



Art/Women/California 1950–2000: Parallels and Intersections

Edited by Diana Burgess Fuller and Daniela Salvioni. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 389 pp., $65 cloth, $35 paper.)

Reviewed by Claire Perry, Curator of American Art, Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts, Stanford University, and author of *Pacific Arcadia: Images of California, 1600-1915*

Art/Women/California is a collection of twenty essays that examine the role of women artists in post-World War II California. Within a framework defined by gender, chronology, and the region's major ethnic and cultural communities, the book aims to present a comprehensive survey of art made by women during the second half of the twentieth century.

Essays by twenty different authors communicate a variety of perspectives. Among the many topics addressed in the book, activist Angela Davis writes about women artists and the labor movement, artist Amalia Mesa-Bains examines the role of Latina women and their art, and curator Sandra Phillips discusses women artists engaged with photography. The result is an unusual and stimulating mixture that provides a general synopsis of the art produced by women in California during this time period.

Art/Women/California is an ambitious undertaking, and Diana Burgess Fuller and Daniela Salvioni, the book's editors, should be congratulated for their willingness to tackle such a large topic. In an introductory essay, Whitney Chadwick defines the difficulty inherent in such an endeavor: "How is it possible to generalize about the experiences of women who have, in many cases, located their social, political, and cultural identity in a recognition of difference?"

Clearly, the editors conclude that such generalizations are not possible—or at least not worth striving for at this juncture. Rather than attempting to create a synthesis of the often-conflicting themes of art making, gender, class, ethnicity, technology, and regional affinities in California, the editors settle for descriptions of the contributions of specific artists. The book puts the art and ideas of individual women front and center and allows them to serve as an explanation for the whole subject of women artists in California.

The editors describe their approach as "more akin to a roving telescope than a wide-angle lens," but this suggests greater depth and nuance than is actually present in the essays. The writings are grouped into four very broad thematic sections, and many of the articles within them simply provide a chronological overview of a particular aspect of the field. The "Parallels" section focuses on the expression of ethnic and racial identities and includes the histories of African American, Native American, Asian American, European American, and Chicana women artists. Two segments titled "Intersections" investigate relationships between groups of artists, artistic collaborations, and women artists working with video, performance art, earthworks, and other nontraditional media. Linking these wide-ranging elements is the overarching theme of the artists' engagement with the culture and landscape of California.

For the most part, the "roving telescope" strategy is effective. Although the provocative ideas contained within the art are never drawn together in a grand synthesis, the compelling nature of the images and the stories that accompany them provide a rich experience. *Art/Women/California* leaves it to the reader to make connections and ultimately raises more questions than it answers. For a text that is meant to serve as an introduction to the subject, this is a good place to start.

Golden State, Golden Youth

By Kirse Granat May (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002, 256 pp., $18.95 paper.)

Imagine Nation

Edited by Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (New York: Routledge, 2002, 398 pp., $26.95 paper.)

Reviewed by W. J. Rorabaugh, professor, of history, University of Washington, and author of *Berkeley at War: The 1960.*

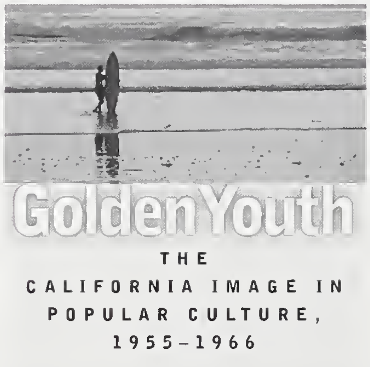
California cannot be a place, because such a curious and marvelous place could never logically exist. Nor can California be a state of mind, because so much of what has transpired in the Golden State has been mindless. Neither a place nor a state of mind, California must instead be a myth, an attitude, a yearning, a heart-felt hope, or a form of self-indulgence.

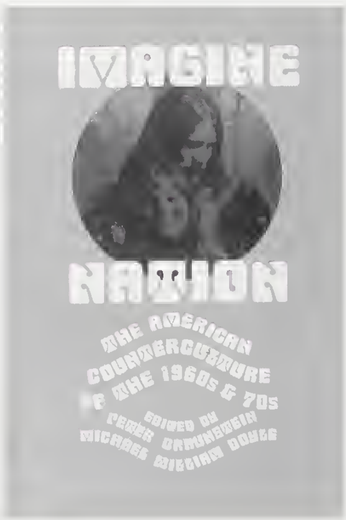
Few have understood the degree to which California's charms — such as Disney magic, surf music, or Hollywood's celluloid illusions—

are credible only so long as they are not too intensely examined. This quality of being a glittering chimera is the key to understanding the state's role in the recent American past. As Kirse Granat May shows in *Golden State, Golden Youth*, both "California" and "youth" operated as powerful, intertwined, media-hyped symbols that shimmered in the American psyche from 1945 to 1965. May explores California's emergence after World War II as a suburban Eden, the development of Disneyland and the nationally televised Mickey Mouse Club as celebrations about the state and its youth, the darker side shown in *Rebel without a Cause*, and the triumph of endless summer fun for sun-bleached blond suburban white youth in the Gidget beach movies, the Beach Boys' surf music, and beach party films. These cultural forms helped create a sunny, upbeat, and wholesome image about California and its youth.

May argues that this widely held image was shattered both by the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley in 1964 and by the Watts race riot in Los Angeles a year later. Those twin traumas enabled Ronald Reagan to ride the crest of a wave of revulsion to election as governor in 1966. Political conservatism, in other words, triumphed because Reagan, who understood the importance of symbols, denounced the events that had clashed with postwar idealizations and reaffirmed an older notion, dating to his own youth, of California as the promised land. Although the argument rings true, this delightful book is not analytically deep.

In passing, May notes that the crucial moment for cultural change occurred in the mid-1960s. As the Beach Boys' musical tide flowed out, a powerful youth-led counterculture rolled inland from both coasts. While that movement shattered previous images in popular culture, it did much more and, most important, went a long way toward making the United States the country that it is today. A serious exploration of the sixties counterculture can be found in *Imagine Nation*, edited by Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle. This volume's thirteen wide-ranging essays reveal the counterculture's complexity and diversity. Essays include David Farber on drugs, Debra Michals on feminist consciousness-raising, Doug Rossinow on New Left ties to the counterculture in Austin, Texas, Philip Deloria on Indians and whites playing Indian, Robert McRuer on gay liberation, Peter Braunstein on youth culture, Beth Bailey on sex, Timothy Miller on communes, and Andrew Kirk on alternative technology, including Stewart Brand's *Whole Earth Catalog*. Standout essays are those by Jeff Hale on the way that John Sinclair and the MC5 band combined popular culture and radical politics, Lauren Onkey on the racial ironies in Jimi Hendrix's career, and David James on the underground films of Jonas Mekas and Stan Brakhage. Surprisingly, this volume underemphasizes the San Francisco Bay Area with the exception of Michael Doyle's fine discussion of the cultural and political radicalism of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, Ronnie Davis, and the Diggers.




IMAGINE NATION
THE AMERICAN COUNTERCULTURE OF THE 1960s & 70s
EDITED BY PETER BRAUNSTEIN MICHAEL WILLIAM DOYLE

Most of these authors see connections between the counterculture and sixties radicalism. Although those ties are clear in many essays, most notably in Hale's, that overall conclusion neither applies consistently to all of the essays nor conforms to most other current scholarship. It is easy to overemphasize political radicalism inside the counterculture because those who were involved in politics generated far better records (including FBI files) than did most of those who disdained politics. The inarticulateness of drugged-out hippies makes them especially difficult to study. Counter-culture bands such as Blue Cheer, The Sons of Champlin, or New Riders of the Purple Sage avoided politics. Their music, however, would never be confused with that of the Beach Boys. In other words, the cultural change was profound, even when it did not involve politics. One wishes that this suggestive and complicated book had focused less on the counterculture's ties to political radicalism and more on the significance of the era's massive cultural upheaval. Despite limitations, this collection makes an important scholarly contribution to a challenging, understudied topic.

Race and Homicide in Nineteenth-Century California

By Clare V. McKanna, Jr. (Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 2002, xii, 141 pp., $29.95 cloth.)

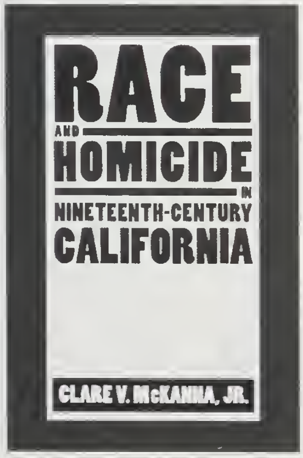
Rebel and a Cause: Caryl Chessman and the Politics of the Death Penalty in Postwar California, 1948-1974

By Theodore Hamm (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, xi, 209 pp., $45 cloth, $16.95 paper.)

Reviewed by Robert M. Senkewicz, professor of history, Santa Clara University, and author of *Vigilantes in Gold Rush California*

Social historians have long understood that the formal and informal workings of a society's criminal justice system can offer an important focus on that society's larger social values. These two excellent works demonstrate the continued truth of that understanding.

Clare V. McKanna, Jr., has long studied Western violence. In this volume he examines seven California counties—Sacramento, San Joaquin, Calaveras, Tuolumne, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and San Diego—in the nineteenth century. He argues that race, social structure, and marginality greatly affected what happened to defendants in the criminal justice system. In short, "two standards of justice operated—one for whites and one for minorities." His detailed quantitative research on 1,338 homicide cases in the seven counties makes this volume one of the most complete accounts we have of nineteenth-century California justice.



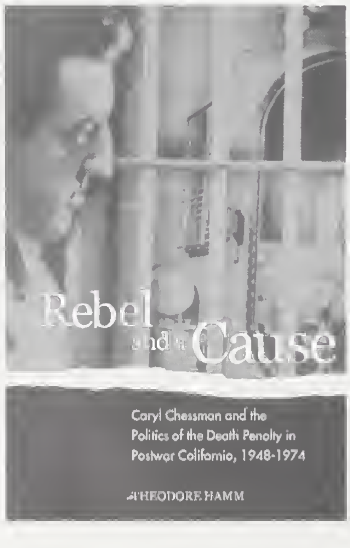
McKanna studies four groups: Indians, Chinese, Hispanics, and whites. He finds that Indians killed outside of their group more than the members of the other three groups and that they were the least prepared to deal with the legal issues they encountered in court. He draws a vivid picture of the Native Californians who were accused of murder; they tended to be displaced young men who drifted back and forth between the Indian and white worlds. Chinese, who were less likely to kill outside their race than any of the other groups, benefited from the tight structure of their communities and had more consistent access to legal representation than did either of the other nonwhite groups. Hispanics had the second highest rate of killing outside their group and, when they killed a white, their conviction rates increased. Only those who were befriended by a wealthy Californio could hope for legal assistance. Finally, whites tended to kill each other. McKanna attributes many of those murders to "young men, alcohol, petty squabbles over property, the pervasive gun culture, and devotion to honor." In a concluding chapter, he argues that his data suggests that the long-running debate about Western violence might profitably be reconceptualized. Rather than argue about whether the region was more violent than the rest of the country, scholars might instead examine the undeniable "enclaves of violence" there and seek to understand the forces which sparked temporary but intense outbreaks of violence.

McKanna tells his story well. While his command of the data is secure, his analysis of some of the cultural phenomena he investigates can be a bit imprecise. He tends to assume, for instance, that the notion of *machismo* was experienced in the same fashion by all Hispanic males, regardless of their ethnic origin or social class. Also, one wonders if his argument that "whites seldom killed minorities" reflects the full historical reality or rather the fact that such murders might often not produce coroners' inquests, indictments, and the other types of legal documents he used to construct his database. On the whole, however, this is an excellent study of nineteenth-century California.

Theodore Hamm's study of Caryl Chessman—who was called the "Red-Light Bandit" and executed in 1960 for kidnapping, assault, and robbery—examines the limits of social reform in postwar California. Hamm asks why the notable legal successes of the movement to abolish the death penalty after Chessman's execution proved so ephemeral. In investigating this issue, he examines the Chessman affair from a variety of perspectives. He argues that the postwar abolition movement in California was based on a "therapeutic" model. It shared with its predecessors a strong connection to prison reform concerns. The behaviorist terminology that permeated mid-twentieth-century prison reform efforts offered the possibility of "rehabilitation" of the incarcerated. San Quentin warden Clinton J. Duffy was a promoter of this view, and the establishment of a criminology department at the University of California in the 1940s was in the same vein. Abolition of the death penalty, which was "the antithesis of reform," was a natural part of the movement. In this environment, the key question surrounding Chessman thus became a narrow one: Was he "rehabilitated"? In his books Chessman argued that he was, and his supporters in the literary and professional communities agreed. Since Chessman always maintained his innocence of the "red light" offenses, he insisted that he had been rehabilitated from an earlier life of crime, not for the crimes for which he had been sentenced to death. Those who favored his execution, including Governor Brown, did not contest the rehabilitation ideal. They simply did not believe Chessman's claims to have achieved it.

Hamm argues that the language in which the controversy was conducted carried the seeds of the defeat of the abolition movement, for the language was desiccated and largely technical. The pro-Chessman movement was a "modern professional movement" that tried to influence events from the perspective of managerial expertise. It lacked a connection to a broader public. Hamm contrasts the unsuccessful movement to save Chessman with the overtly political and ultimately successful movement to stop the execution of Wesley Robert Wells, an African American inmate sentenced to death for assaulting a prison guard. In its lack of attention to the world beyond its own professional assumptions, the movement that championed Chessman unwittingly ceded the broader range of public opinion to its opponents.

In the course of making this generally persuasive argument, Hamm investigates a broad range of related issues, such as sexuality, which played a prominent, although at times coded, role in the discussion. He also makes fine use of the letters written to Brown on the case by a host of ordinary Californians. While he does not seem to provide compelling evidence that Chessman was so significant in the development of either the New Left or the New Right as he claims, he does capture the passion of the debate in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Both of these fine volumes deserve wide readership for the perceptive insights they offer on nineteenth and twentieth-century California.


Rebel and a Cause
Caryl Chessman and the Politics of the Death Penalty in Postwar California, 1948-1974
THEODORE HAMM

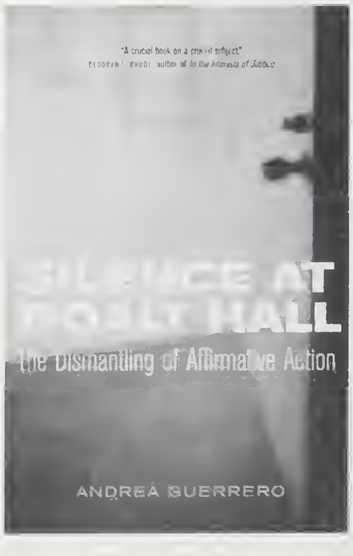
Silence at Boalt Hall: The Dismantling of Affirmative Action

By Andrea Guerrero (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 262 pp., $49.95 cloth, $19.95 paper.)

Reviewed by L. B. de Graaf, professor of history, California State University, Fullerton, and co-editor of *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*

Affirmative action in higher education admissions was a controversial policy from its inception in the late 1960s until its invalidation by the University of California Board of Regents in 1995 and passage of Proposition 209 of the following year. Since then, many seem to have forgotten about the issues of diversity in student enrollments or faculty hiring or accepted the idea that "color blind" admissions standards are needed to assure academic excellence. To Andrea Guerrero, a member of the last class admitted to Boalt Hall School of Law under race preference standards and an active proponent of restoring that policy, this silence is detrimental to both under-represented minorities and to a broader understanding of each other among American ethnic groups. This book is an effort to remind the public of why affirmative action was instituted, what it accomplished, and what the consequences of dismantling it have been.

This work should be of interest to state and local historians for its dual focus. It is primarily a history of race preference programs at one school of law from their beginnings in 1968 to the end of the century. Yet it places the history within the context of that issue nationwide. The result is an excellent example of how the study of a local issue can bring sharper insights to broader issues than national rhetoric often affords. The history begins with the decision of Boalt Hall to modify traditional reliance on numerical test scores with the setting aside of a portion of each new class by considerations of racial and socioeconomic background. The topic is extended nationally through the Supreme Court cases of the 1970s that upheld this policy. The author then traces the accompanying issue of racial preference in faculty hiring, mixing arguments against both policies with long explanations of why they were needed. The campaign to repeal these programs both at the university and statewide are extensively covered, culminating in the drastic reductions of minority enrollments that ensued. Final chapters discuss efforts to find alterna-


"A crucial book on a crucial subject"
Deborah L. Rhode, author of In the Interests of Justice
SILENCE AT BOALT HALL
The Dismantling of Affirmative Action
ANDREA GUERRERO

tives that would restore minority presence as well as efforts to expand the anti-affirmative action campaign to other states. The book ends reasserting that ethnic diversity is essential to higher education and that as a policy to achieve it "there is no substitute for race."

This book offers a good overview of the issue of affirmative action in higher education as well as in-depth analysis of the intricacies of various policies and their human impacts. Few are likely to regard numerical indicators like the Law School Admission Test as "race neutral" after reading Guerrero's analysis of their built-in preferences. But this case is overdone in places by lengthy quotes that repeat the same points and very detailed narratives of student protests on behalf of affirmative action. The case for diversity rests excessively on the idea that minority students need a "critical mass" of their race in order to feel comfortable, a premise documented largely by interviews with a few students. But these are minor flaws in a book that reminds us of an aspect of California's recent history that is still very much alive and in need of attention and understanding.

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Apostol, Jane. *Duncan Gleason: Artist, Athlete, and Author*. Los Angeles: Historical Society of Southern California, 2003. $32 (cloth); $22 (paper); both prices include tax and shipping. "The story of a remarkable fourth-generation Californian who achieved fame as illustrator, marine artist, champion gymnast, skilled yachtsman, authority on early sailing ships, and author." Order from: Historical Society of Southern California; 200 E. Avenue 43; Los Angeles, CA 90031.

Boyd, Nan Alamilla. *Wide-Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. $27.50 (cloth) ISBN: 0520204158. Order from: University of California Press; California-Princeton Fulfillment Services; 1445 Lower Ferry Rd.; Ewing, NJ 08618.

Brown, Forman. *Olvera Street and the Avila Adobe*. Guasti, CA: Hutson Publications, 2003. Reprint of original 1930 edition; illustrated by Mabel L. Piper. $2.50 (paper). Order from: Hutson Publications; Post Office Box 1314; Guasti, CA 91743.

Butler, Phyllis Filiberti. *The Valley of Santa Clara: A Guide to the Heart of Silicon Valley*. Menlo Park, CA: Bay Research Press, 2002. Second, revised edition. $15 (paper) ISBN: 0916286029. Order from: Bay Research Press; 817 Partridge Ave., No. 17; Menlo Park, CA 94025.

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Clark, Arthur H. and **Patrick J. Brunet**. *The Arthur H. Clark Company: An American Century, 1902-2002.* Introduction by Richard Weatherford. Spokane: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2002. "A complete history and bibliography of the Clark Company." $75 (cloth), shipping charge of $4.50 for one book, except when check or money order accompanies order. ISBN: 0870623192. Order from: The Arthur H. Clark Company; Post Office Box 14707; Spokane, WA 99214.

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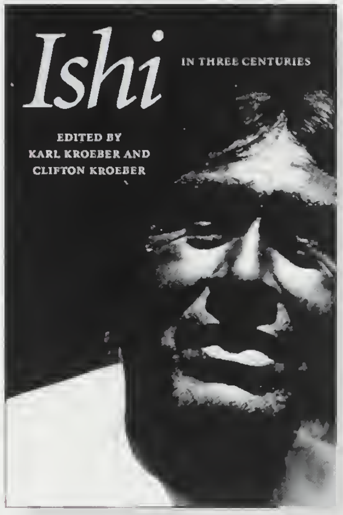
Front cover: Ohioan Robert P. Effinger lost no time realizing that few forty-niners struck it rich. "Instead of digging gold in the rich placers of Upper California, I am working for Uncle Sam among the barren mountains that skirt the Pacific," he crowed from San Diego to his brother Michael in Lancaster, Ohio. "Not a tree or semblance of tree grows within eighteen miles of San Diego. Why, this country looks as odd to a man raised in Ohio as a race of people [with] naturally bald heads." Maurice Braun, *Hills at Lakeside, San Diego*, 1917. Courtesy of the Irvine Museum, Irvine, CA.

Back cover: "A Lee Lunch." The sturdy Effinger delighted in telling the folks back home about his fellow travelers' seasickness. "No sooner had we struck the Gulf, than some of the passengers began to give premonitory symptoms of sea sickness. . . . At first it amused me very much to see the poor fellows stagger to the guards and heave up, or as they call it here at sea, 'cascade.' But after awhile my diversion and amusement was turned into pity for really I never saw more suffering and excruciating pain and agony." Henry Firks, from fourteen humorous sketches made on a schooner journey from California to Panama, 1847, California Historical Society, FN-35940.



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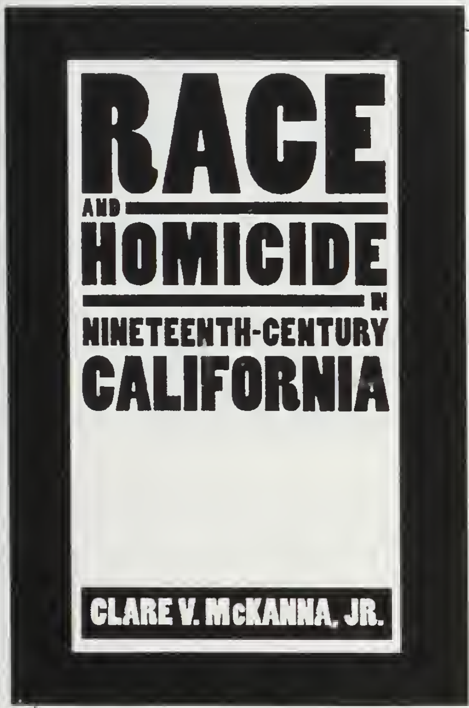
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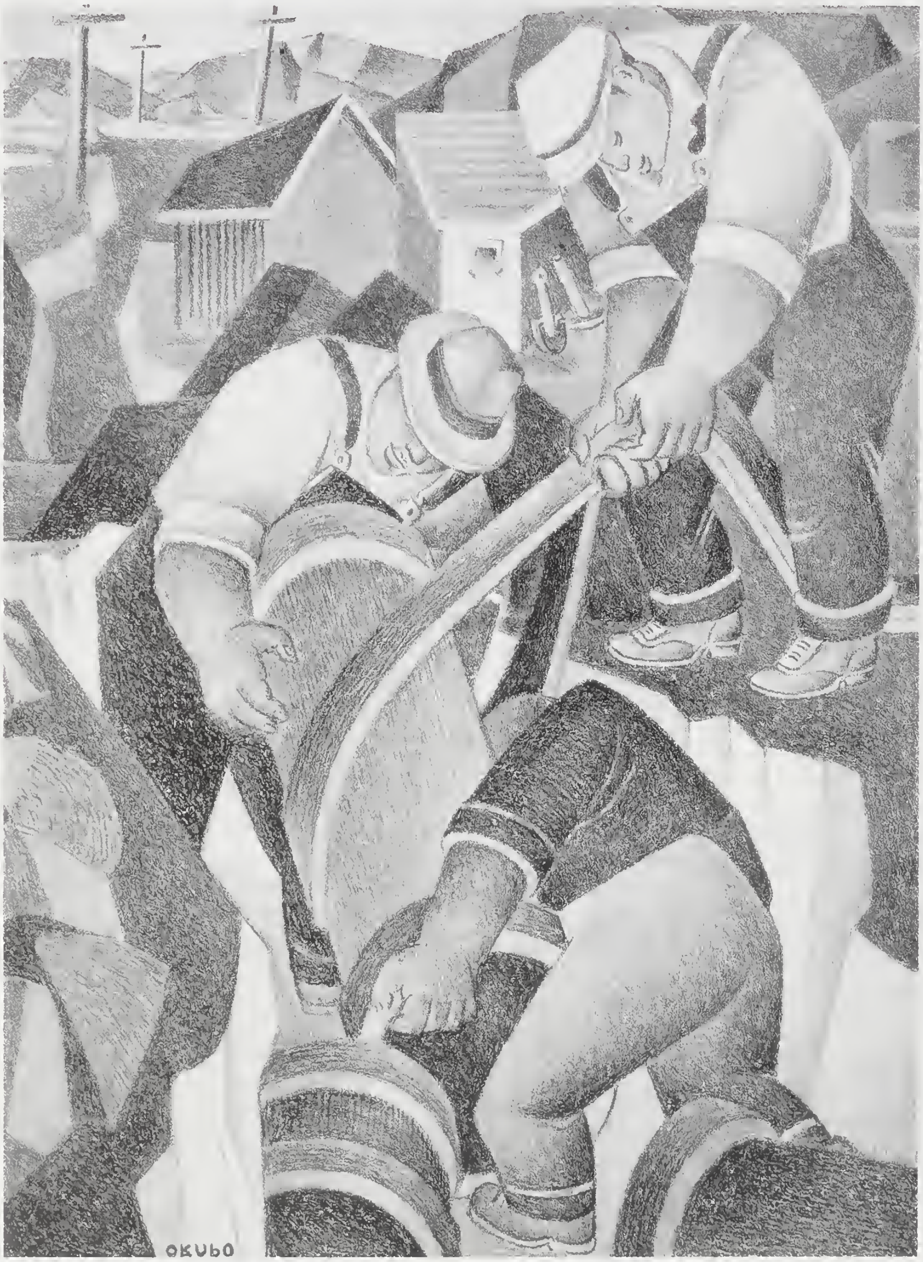

Mine Okubo
Men Working
(The Pipe Layers)
ca. 1939
Lithograph
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Just as R. P. Effinger reported on the conditions of Californians in his letters home in the mid-nineteenth century, Japanese American artist Mine Okubo (1912–2001) commented on social conditions in twentieth-century California in her artwork.

Men Working (1939) bears testimony to the physical strength and solid dignity of labor. Created prior to her internment in the Tanforan Assembly Center and Topaz, Utah, Relocation Center during World War II, the piece shows the influence of Diego Rivera, whom she observed working on his Pan American Unity mural at the Golden Gate International Exhibition in 1940. The work also reflects her studies in Paris in the 1930s, where she integrated the geometric forms of her teacher Fernand Léger into her depictions of life in the United States.

Okubo is best-known for her illustrated memoir *Citizen 13660* (first published in 1946) about her experiences during her internment. After her release, she taught at the University of California, Berkeley for several years before moving to New York City, where she lived until her death. Her work appears in *At Work: The Art of California Labor*, published by the California Historical Society and Heyday Books.

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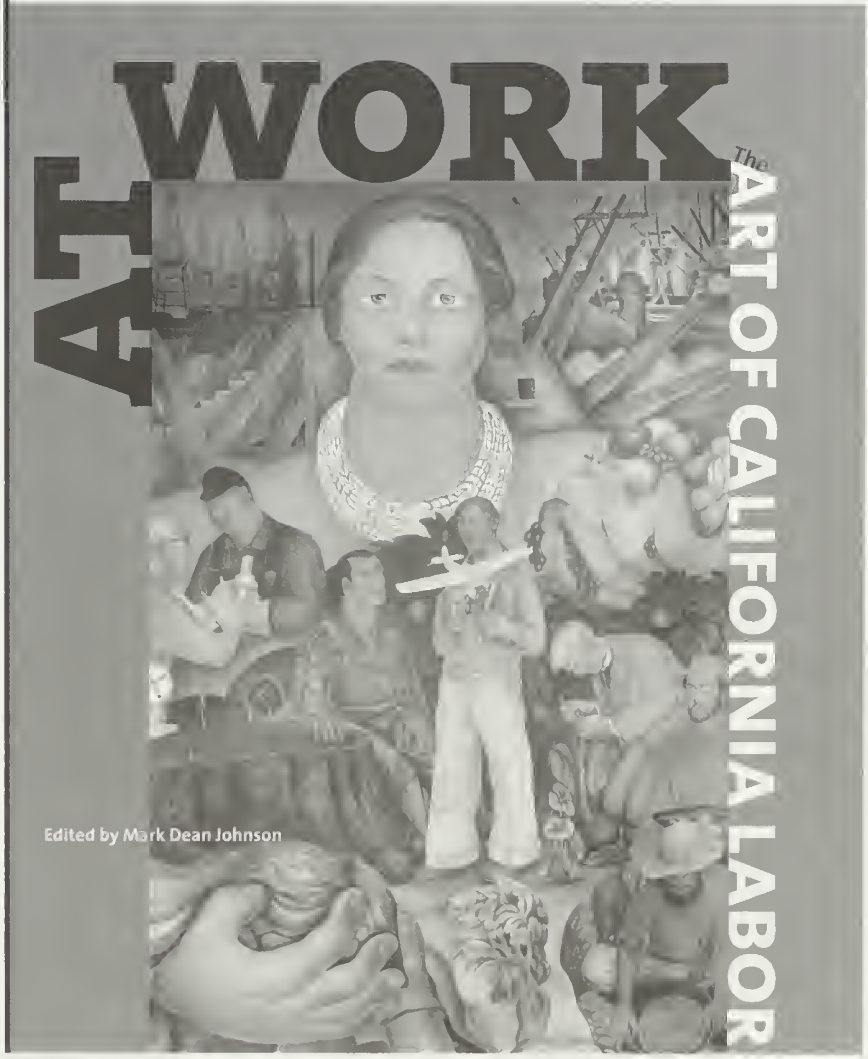

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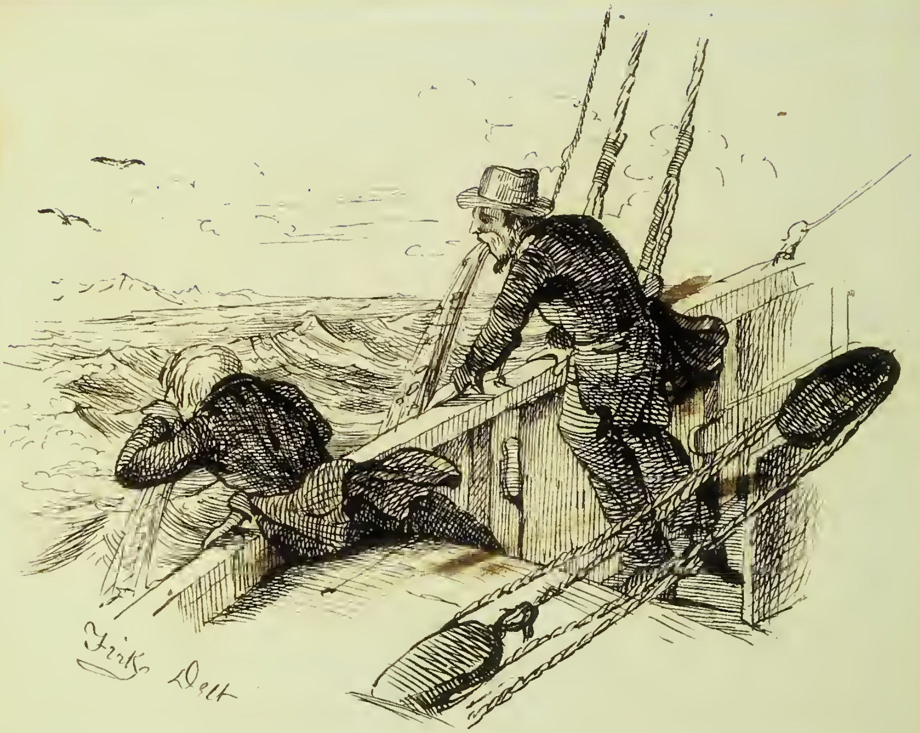

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THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a statewide membership-based organization designated by the Legislature as the state historical society. Its mission is to engage the public's interest and participation in collecting, preserving, and presenting art, artifacts, and written materials relevant to the history of California and to support historical research, publication, and educational activities.

A quarterly journal published by CHS since 1922, *California History* features articles by leading scholars and writers focusing on the heritage of California and the West from pre-Columbian to modern times. Illustrated articles, pictorial essays, and book reviews examine the ongoing dialogue between the past and the present. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

FROM THE EDITOR

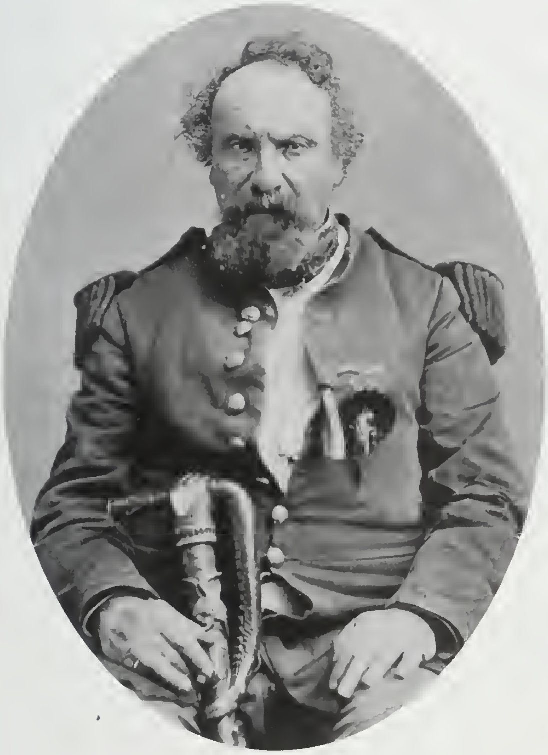
Times change; you might say that it is in the very nature of this world of ours to be a scene of changes. And so it is with *California History*. We are pleased to introduce not only a new look, designed by Melanie Doherty and Associates, but several new features to this, the quarterly magazine of the California Historical Society.

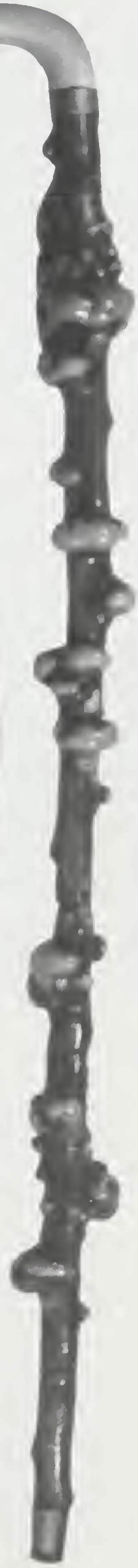
Based on our observation that regular readers of *California History* bear a broad streak of wanderlust, we offer "California Journeys," written by freelance journalist Barbara Tannenbaum. We intend to encourage our readers to engage in fieldwork of the finest kind: trips that feed their passion for knowledge, real-time observation, and local delectables. "California History Collections," written in its inaugural appearance by Executive Director Stephen Becker, highlights an artifact, an image, a book, or a document from the unmatched CHS collections. And we close with "Spotlight," a photograph selected in each issue for its timeliness or timelessness and graphic eloquence.

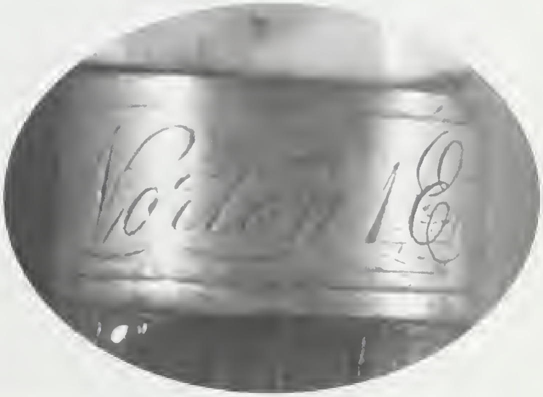
If some things change, others stay the same. As always, essays in *California History* are peer-reviewed and reflect our dedication to exploring the relationships between past and present, underscoring our commitment to connecting the history of California and the West to the rest of the nation and the world. *California History* also continues to run book reviews edited by Dr. James J. Rawls. From the many many books sent to CHS by authors and publishers, Rawls selects the most distinctive and solicits reviews by experts in the field. Also continuing a long and much-appreciated tradition, Charles N. Johnson from the Ventura County Museum of History and Art compiles the "Checklist." Johnson combs through an extensive and expanding tangle of publications, providing notice of those that portray the diverse and exceptional nature of the state, whether recent works or reprints.

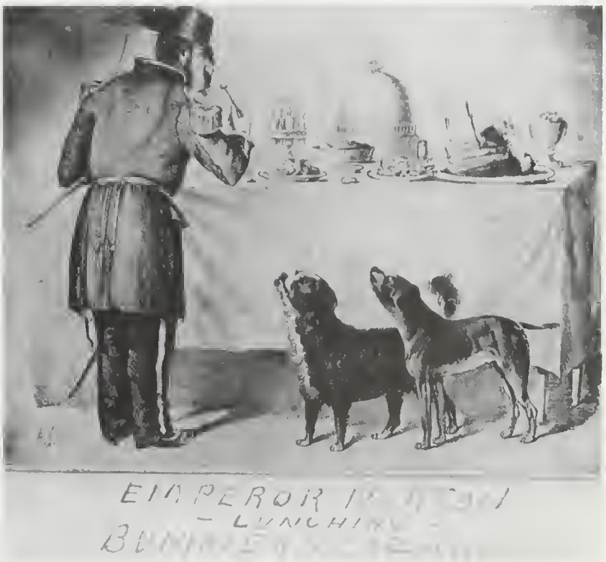
To all of the contributors to this issue and to many others behind the scenes who have assisted us, we salute you. And you the reader: We hope you learn from, are stimulated by, and enjoy *California History*. Drop us a line to let us know how you like us now.

JANET FIREMAN
Editor









The Emperor's Cane

The eccentric and much-loved Emperor Norton lives on as his story is recounted frequently and with affection as an example of San Francisco's tolerance. Joshua A. Norton, born in London (in 1811, 1818, or 1819, depending on the source), arrived in San Francisco in 1849 and entered the real estate business. He quickly became quite wealthy, and just as quickly lost everything. As he soldiered through litigation, court dates, and general embarrassment, Norton's sanity apparently slipped away. Reinvented as the center of a fantasy, he declared himself Norton I, Emperor of the United States, on September 17, 1859.

Norton habitually chose a military suit of clothes, often accessorized with sword or cane. He was a man about town, his mangy dogs Bummer and Lazarus at his side. He levied taxes, printed his own scrip—and carried on as emperor until his death in 1880.

Rarely exhibited but treasured in the Society's collections is one of the Emperor's canes, a gnarled wooden stick, inscribed on the silver band at the top "Norton I Emperor."

A VILLAGE ROMANCE:

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO OFFERS A WINDOW TO CALIFORNIA'S STORIED PAST

BY BARBARA TANNENBAUM

Throughout California, only a handful of monuments or markers link us to our earliest settlements. The town of San Juan Capistrano is an exception, however. For it is not one building, not even the bougainvillea covered chapel and ruins of the beautiful mission (founded in 1776 and battered by earthquakes since 1812) that remind visitors of California's past. It is the presence of more than twenty-three buildings throughout the town, an intact Santa Fe railroad depot, and an entire residential district—Los Rios—that have all attained historical landmark status. A slice of Old California remains, authentic and welcoming.

With his snow-white beard, straw-brimmed hat, and tropical colored shirt, Tony Forster looks like a southern California Santa Claus. He is president of San Juan Capistrano's Historical Society, a position he's held for fifteen years, and his family tree is deeply intertwined with the town's history. Forster's great, great grandfather, Don Juan Forster, purchased the mission from Mexican Governor Pio Pico in 1845 for $710 in hides and tallow. (Mexico seized ownership of the missions following independence from Spain in 1821. They were returned to church ownership by Abraham Lincoln in 1864.) Today, the mission is open to the public daily from 8:30 am to 5 pm for either self-guided or docent-led tours.

Docents from the historical society conduct walking tours every Sunday at 1 pm, but Forster graciously leads me on a private tour around town. For Forster, every building has a story, and he often refers to homes by the name of their first or second owner dating back more than a hundred years rather than by the street number nailed near the front door.

Los Rios District, a forty-acre expanse bordered by the railroad tracks and Trabuco Creek, is California's oldest residential neighborhood. "When the mission was under construction, many of the Acjachemen Indian neophytes would intermarry with the Mexican laborers coming up to work on the c rch," says Forster. "The padres g e them permission to build h nes outside the mission walls."

T ee of the forty-two room, dirt-floor a be homes built in the 1790s are s l here. The **Montañez Adobe** is pen to the public as a museum r by the historical society. The S as Adobe is a private residence, a s the Rios Adobe. But Steve Rios, a rney-at-law, can often be found g eting the public, as his home has t unique distinction of being con- t ously occupied by members o he Rios family for eleven generat s, dating back to 1794 when F ciano Rios, a Spanish soldier, b t the adobe for his new wife a family. No other family home i he state can claim such continu o residence. And the district's m n street, once named Occidental, w renamed Los Rios sometime in t 1900s in honor of its most loyal r dent family.

B Los Rios is far more than its a be buildings. There are a good n nber of single-wall/board and b en and Victorian buildings here t t have been lovingly preserved. I ddition, village ordinances allow f cottage industries to be run from t se homes. Thus, it is possible to g nside a number of homes that d ble as cafés, gift stores, art galleri e even a nursery and family farm.

N to be missed are the **Ramos C é** (949/443-1342), where gourmet m als are served on a tiny outdoor p io, and the **Tea House on Los R s Street** (949/443-3914) for an e gant continental brunch.

Although a self-guided tour won't include tales of how highwayman Juan Murrieta once hid in a secret back room near the **Montañez Adobe**, anyone can sense the town's current atmosphere of serene calm, created in part by the lush foliage and mature olive and pepper trees that shade the street.

A visit to the **Victorian-era O'Neill Museum** (built in 1870 and the headquarters of the historical society) rounds out a visit to Los Rios District. The sun was setting and dinner beckoned at the end of the day. And herein lay San Juan Capistrano's greatest charm—after so much history, there was an abundant number of modern bistros and restaurants to enjoy an evening's repast.

Located directly across from the mission, nothing beats the tree-shaded patio of the **Cedar Creek Inn** for pure romance (26860 Ortega Hwy; 949/240-2229). The menu includes seafood, prime rib, pasta, and signature family recipes.

For classic Mexican cuisine, **El Adobe de Capistrano Restaurant** (31891 Camino Capistrano; 949/830-8620) is steeped in history. It was originally two separate adobe buildings dating back to 1841: the home of Miguel Yorba and the local courthouse and jail. Its modern incarnation as a restaurant began in 1948. As photos on the wall attest, it was especially favored by President Richard Nixon, who brought heads of state to sample the chiles rellenos, enchiladas, and tacos when they were at the Western White House in nearby San Clemente.

For more adventurous palates, the **Sundried Tomato Café** features upscale California cuisine with interesting pairings (such as lamb burgers with gorgonzola cheese or Portobello mushrooms wrapped in prosciutto). The sage-colored café features a wood-burning stove and offers an extensive wine list.

Where to Stay: Mission Inn Motel, 26891 Ortega Highway, 949/493-1151; Best Western Capistrano Inn, 27174 Ortega Highway, 949/ 493-5661.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact the San Juan Capistrano Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Information at 949/ 493-4700. Or visit the city's website at http://www.sanjuancapistrano.net. The San Juan Capistrano Historical Society can be reached at 949/ 493-8444 The website is http://www.sjc-historical-society.com/LOS_RIOS.html

FACING PAGE: The doves of San Juan Capistrano: In an undated photograph, a young girl feeds a resident flock of white doves in front of the old mission church. Courtesy of the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce collection, Santa Ana Public Library.

Adventures in Nature

The Merry Tramps of Oakland

A Photo Essay By Meredith Eliassen

During the 1880s, Oakland, California, was poised to become a hub for manufacturing and transportation on the West Coast. The young city, founded in 1852, could boast of having six banks, three carriage manufacturers, a handful of successful iron foundries and companies that produced marble works, along with the Oakland Planing Mills—the largest producer of wood interior furnishings on the West Coast. An east-west line of the Central Pacific Railroad ran through Oakland, and the railroad sought to add a north-south line, while the Water Front Company was improving wharves in the harbor to receive larger vessels. As a community, Oakland was growing and changing with each influx of skilled workers and artisans from other regions seeking year-round employment in this emerging urban center.

Within this mostly affluent suburb of San Francisco, a grassroots group of artistic, avant-garde campers—which also happened to include a future First Lady of California—came together and called themselves the Merry Tramps. They took advantage of the transportation available to them to head for the hills, coast, and forests in search of recreation and renewal, perhaps heeding the call of Reverend W.H.H. Murray (1840–1904), who encouraged an expanding middle class to take the railways to access wilderness areas that aroused spiritual renewal by experiencing nature first-hand. Their adventures in the wilderness preceded by a generation Jack London's (1876–1916) popularity, when urban dwellers began to romanticize natural lifestyles of the recent past. The Merry Tramps bridged the first American wave of recreational camping that occurred during the 1870s and the philosophic movement that John Muir (1838–1914) energized toward environmentalism.

As luck would have it, among the Tramps' number was a talented photographer named Frank B. Rodolph, who captured the small community's camaraderie and good times. Other mementoes of the Merry Tramps can be found in an autograph book owned by Helen Penniman, who married George Pardee in 1887. Pardee would be governor of California from 1903 to 1907, and his wife's souvenirs and a crazy quilt that she made commemorating her adventures are preserved in the Pardee Home Museum in Oakland.

MERRY TRAMPS"
OF
OAKLAND

"William H. H. Murray doesn't say go camping as a way to go fishing or a way to go hunting . . . but just go camping!"

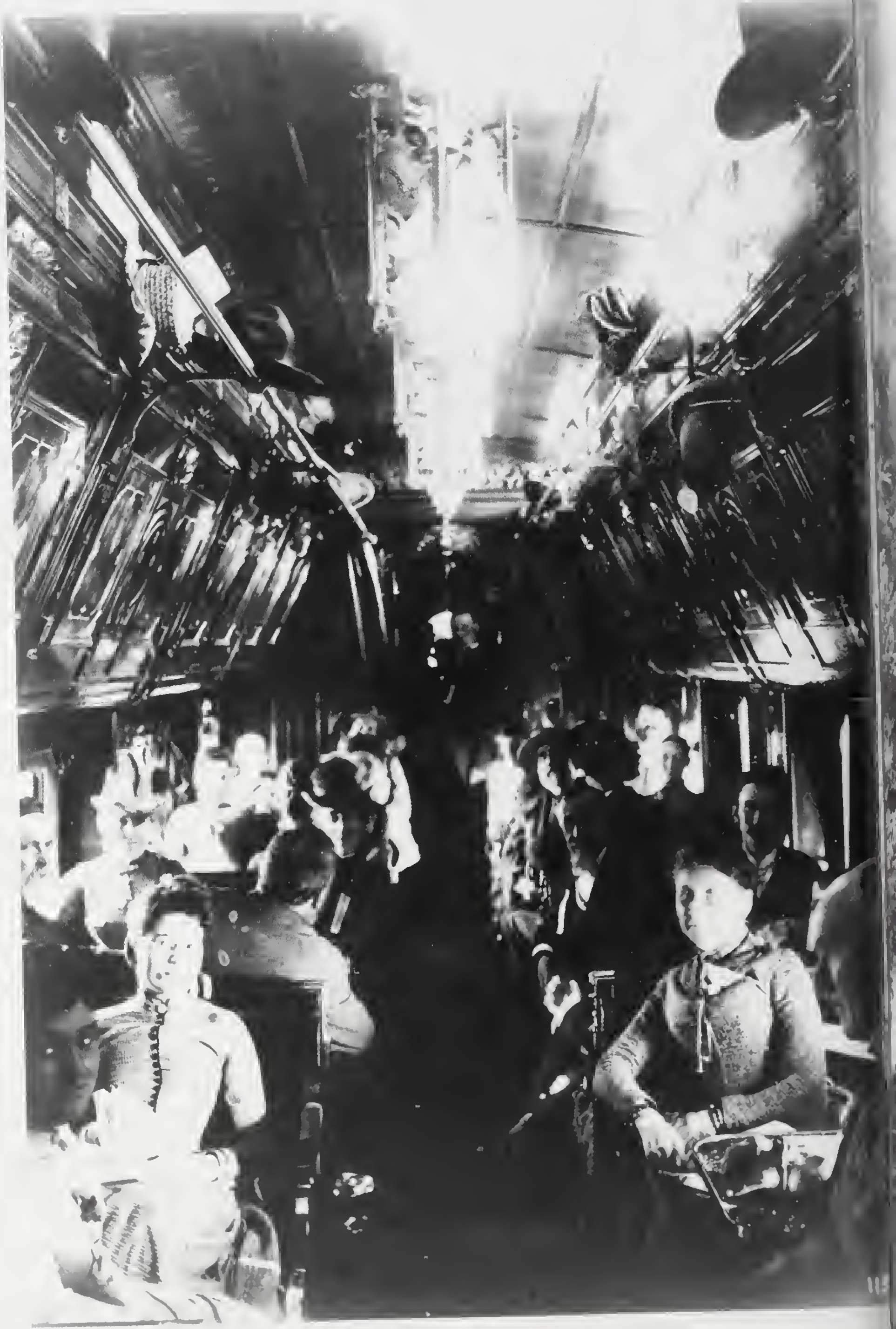
—Geographer Terrence Young on the nineteenth-century camping craze

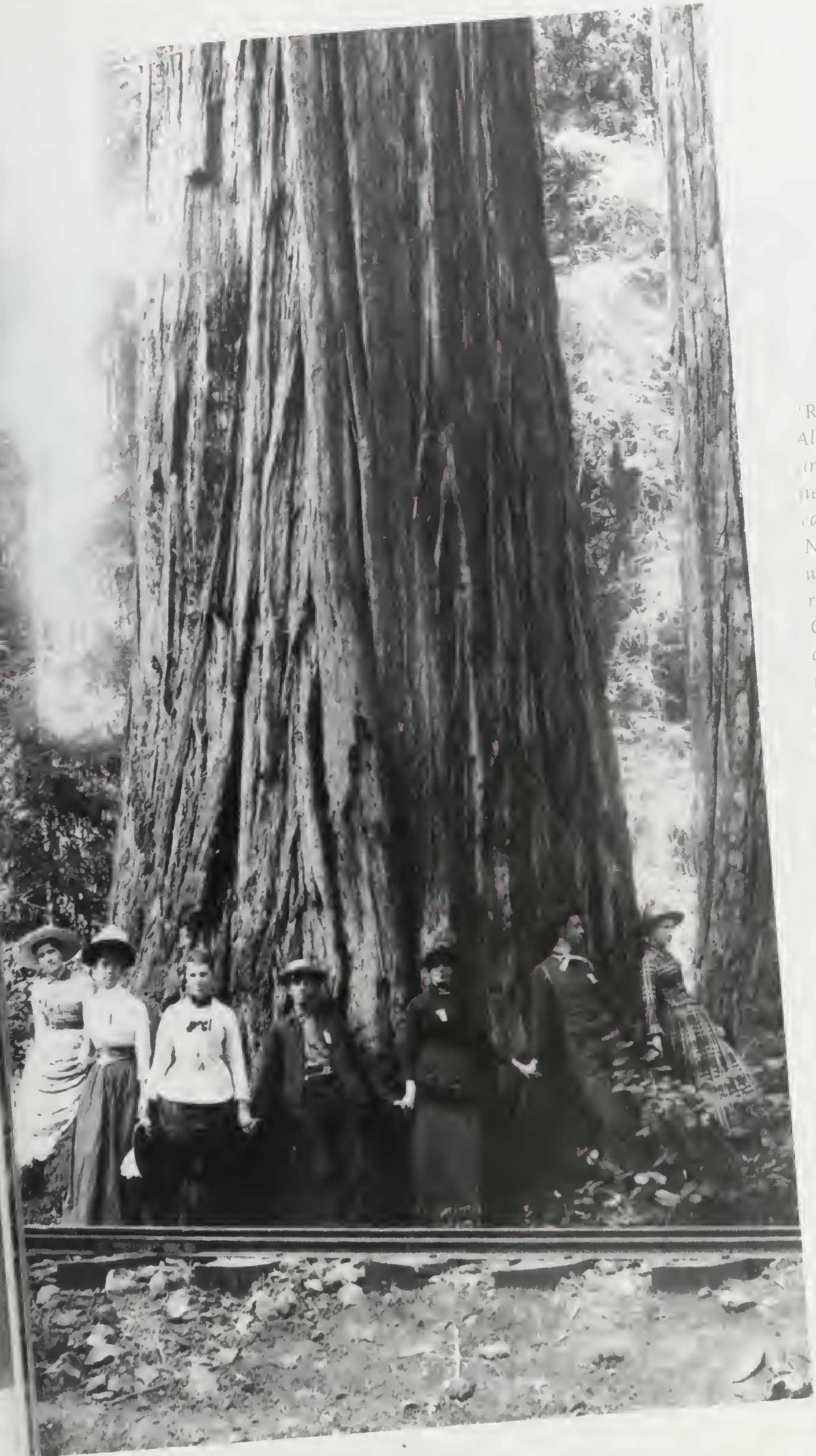
"The Merry Tramps in the Redwoods." *During the 1880s Oakland, California, photographer Frank B. Rodolph captured images of a community of friends enjoying themselves in the outdoors. This informal club called itself the Merry Tramps and for nearly a decade they organized lavish annual excursions to nature spots such as Calistoga, Yosemite, the Russian River, the Sonoma County coast, and even to the San Gabriel Mountains in southern California. Rodolph captured the graceful figures and fashionable hats of nine ladies locked arm in arm, arrayed opposite nine gents braced across the shoulders. Perhaps these "Merry Tramps in the Redwoods" were playing Red Rover or some other game.*

Frank B. Rodolph Photographic Collection, courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

"In the Pullman, Contrasts." This interior shot of a Pullman car illustrates a dichotomy of the Merry Tramps: They traveled in style before they "roughed it" on their camping trips. The Merry Tramps were not unusual in their lavish style of camping; during the 1870s millions of travelers discovered the joys of outdoor recreation. The Merry Tramps traveled by train, ferry, carriage, horseback, and on foot to reach their destinations, sometimes transporting huge amounts of equipment and provisions. In June 1884, the group traveled by train to their campsite near Guerneville, California.

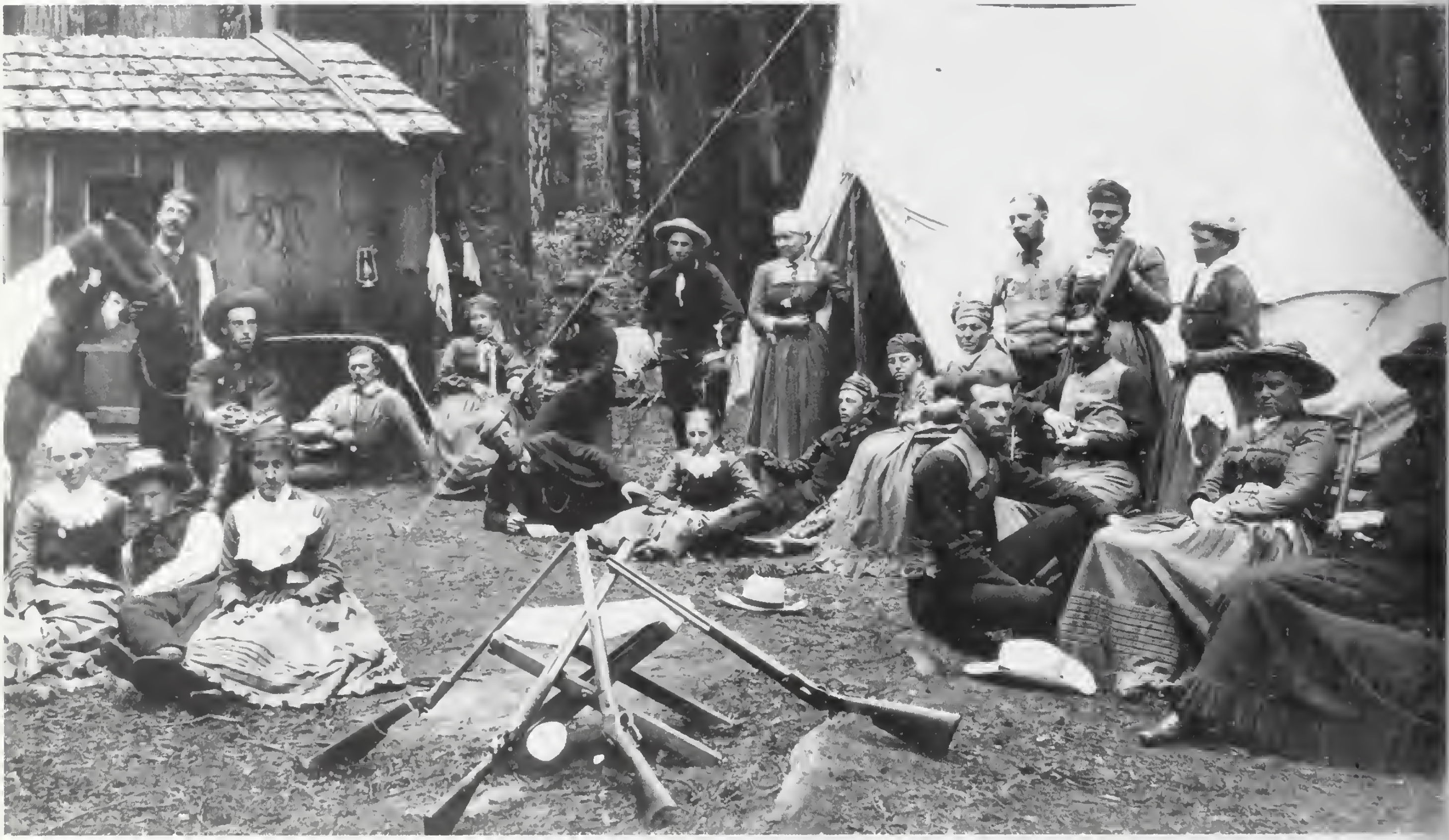
Frank B. Rodolph Photographic Collection, courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley





'Round the Bramble Bush." Although the Merry Tramps were urbanites, their keen sense of wilderness beauty may have fostered an early awareness of conservationism. Near their camp close to Guerneville, women and men hold hands around a redwood tree, with newly laid Pacific Coast Railroad tracks that gave them access to the woods looming large in the foreground.

Frank B. Rodolph Photographic Collection, courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

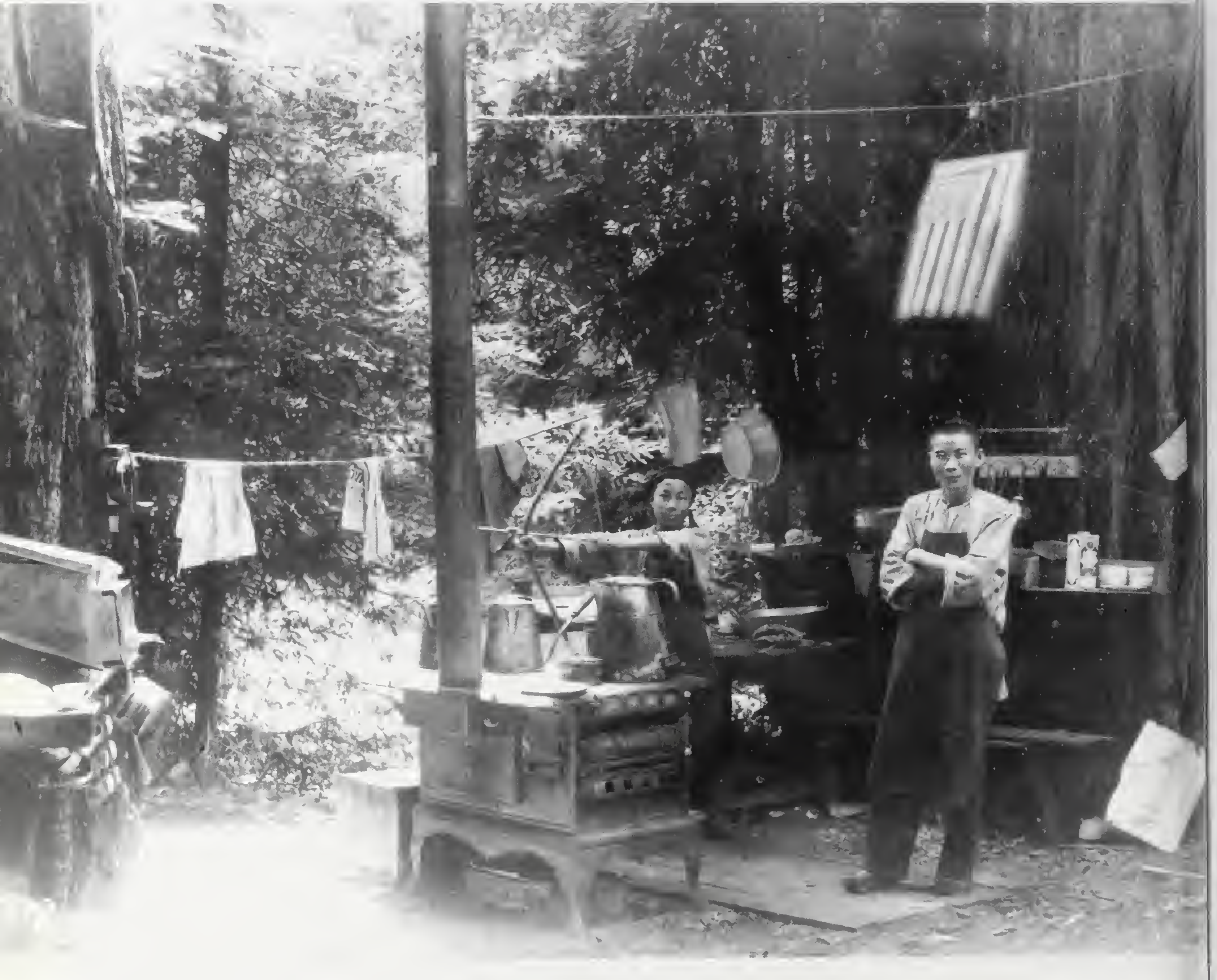


"Merry Tramps." *The family of Oakland druggist Samuel H. Melvin was instrumental in organizing and supplying the Tramps' trips during the early years. Seated with the Melvin family to the left of the stacked rifles is Helen Penniman. This vivacious young redhead, known affectionately as "Helen Blazes," kept many artifacts of the Merry Tramps' travels following her marriage to George Pardee, who was to be California's governor from 1903 to 1907. This group photograph of the Merry Tramps in their Guerneville camp in Sonoma County in June 1884 was formally composed, apparently to include the entire party, even the horse. The precise significance of four firearms stacked against the campstool is unknown. The Merry Tramps emblem is painted on the cabin, surely a sign of pride and at least temporary occupancy.*

Frank B. Rodolph Photographic Collection, courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

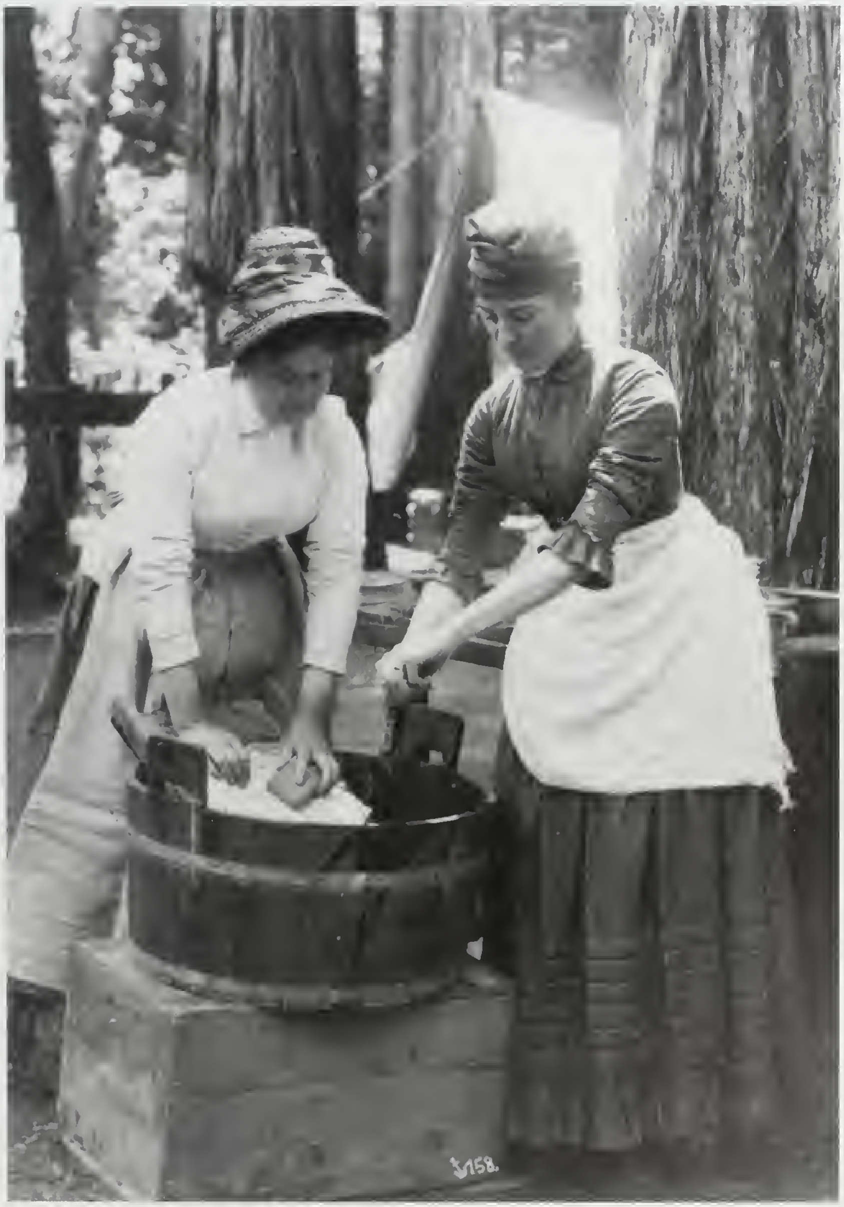
"READING PHYLLIS." *Helen Penniman reads from the blockbuster novel* Phyllis *as others listen and do needlework. Margaret Hungerford (1855–1897), author of* Phyllis *under the pseudonym "Duchess," was the Irish-born romance dream weaver who originated the phrase, "beauty is altogether in the eye of the beholder."*

FRANK B. RODOLPH PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



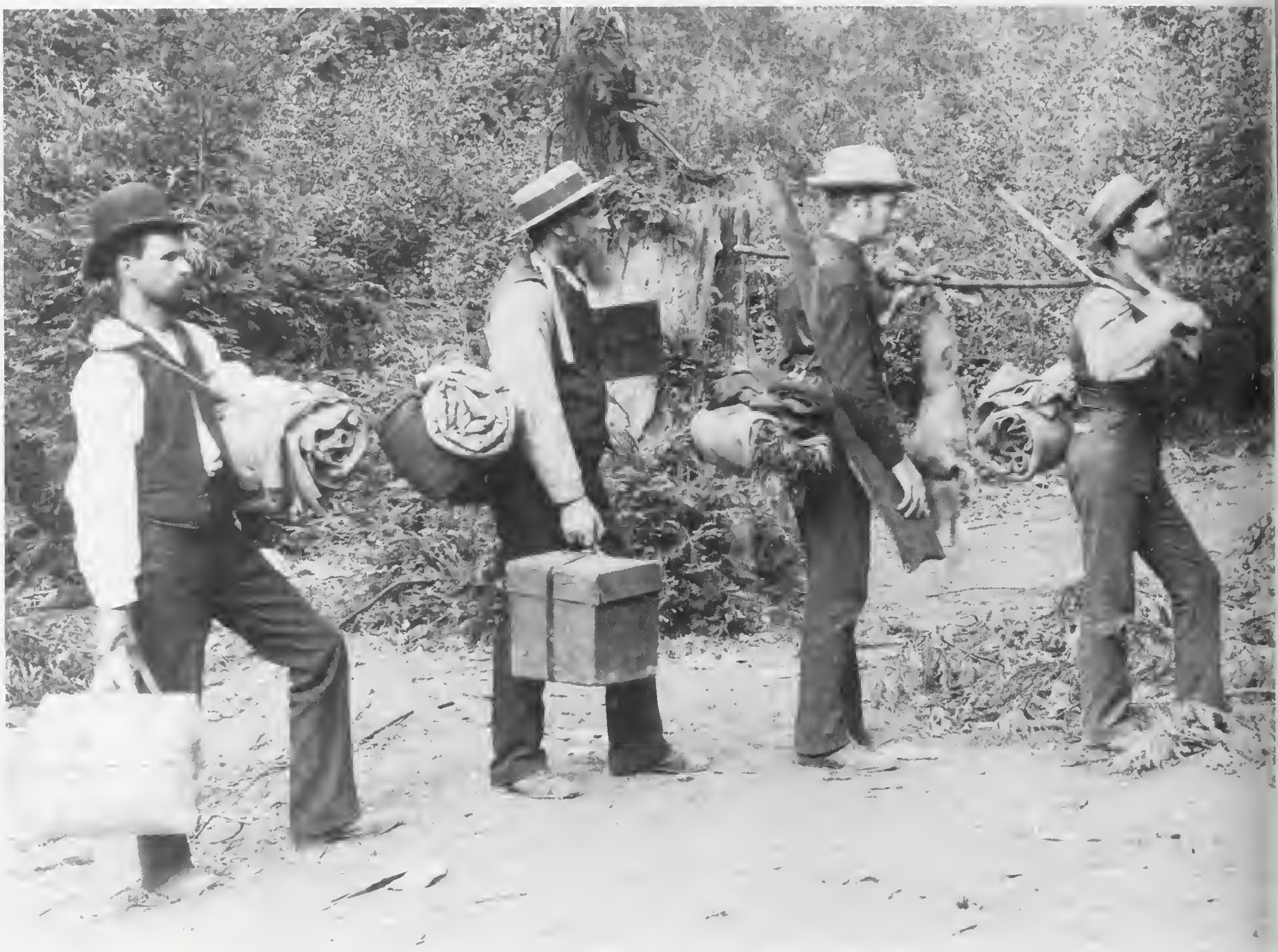
By the 1870s, Oakland had a substantial Chinese population. The city council enacted strict sanitary regulations for housing in the "Chinese quarter," arguing that the living arrangements of Chinese brought down property values. Perfectly satisfied with wilderness sanitation, "Merry Makers: Two Chinese Cooks at Camp in the Redwoods," depicts one of several teams of Chinese cooks hired by the Merry Tramps to cater their excursions.

Frank B. Rodolph Photographic Collection, courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley



"THE WRINGER WASH TUB." *Even on vacation, ordinary domestic chores would not wait. While the Merry Tramps hired Chinese cooks, the women completed the arduous task of washing the clothes.*

FRANK B. RODOLPH PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



"A Tramp Up Mt. Tamalpais." *While the women on the Merry Tramps' excursions read, did needlework, or washed clothes, some of the men set off on a photographic expedition. Photography was a pastime of affluent men because camera equipment and processing was expensive and specialized, to support this occupation, a man would frequently need to have another source of income. Frank Rodolph is the heavily laden, bearded gent second from the left, possibly following his younger brother George. George and the man in front of him tote guns as they carry their evening meal (a rabbit) tied to a stick. The photographers also carry bedrolls for their hike up Mt. Tamalpais. During the 1880s, proto-sleeping bags filled with thin layers of cotton and wool, and covered in canvas, became available for hikers who might tramp for several days.*

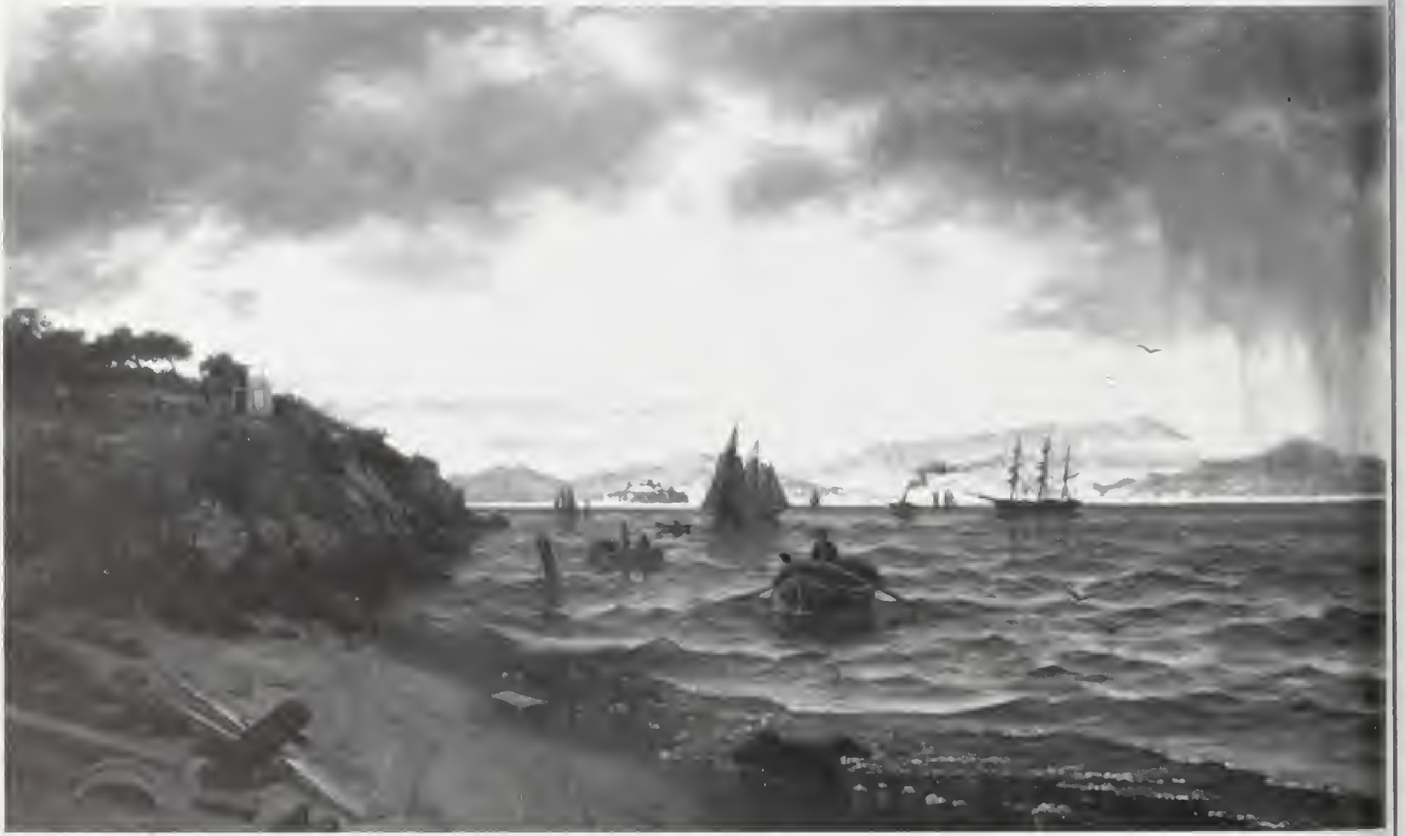
Frank B. Rodolph Photographic Collection, courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

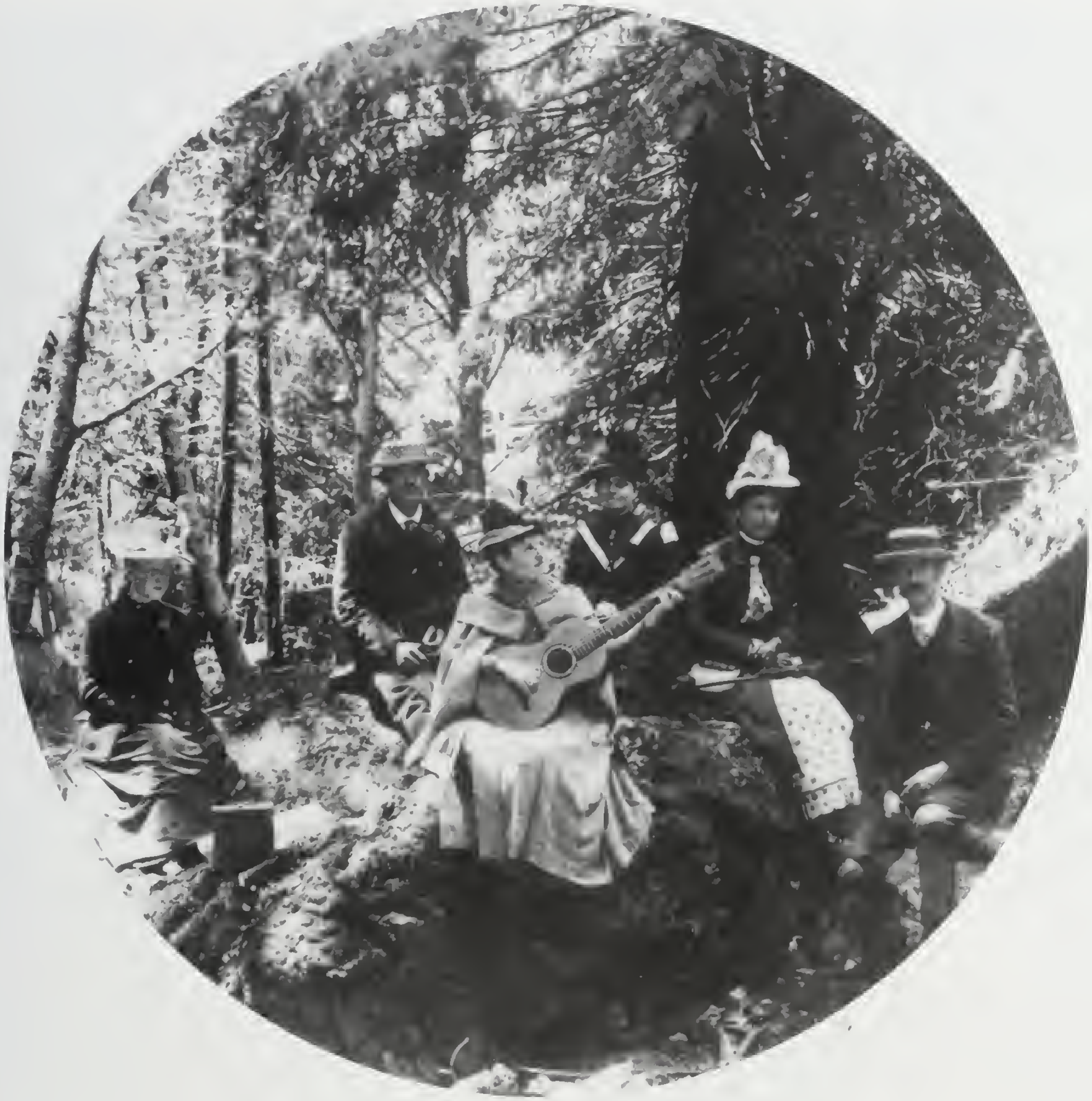
FRANK B. RODOLPH

Like so many Californians of the era, the photographer who so effectively documented the Merry Tramps' late nineteenth-century get-togethers came to the Golden State during the Gold Rush. Frank Rodolph (1843–1923) was born in Wisconsin and moved with his family to California as a boy, settling in Placerville. Unlike many of the Argonauts, the Rodolphs stayed. Frank attended business college in Oakland and then opened a stationery store on Broadway with his father. The store sold textbooks and sheet music as well as the little autograph album that documented the Merry Tramps 1884 sojourn in Guerneville. Rodolph traveled extensively throughout California, documenting the development of many of California's new cities and towns, especially in the Bay Area, Sonoma County, Santa Cruz, and Monterey.

Rodolph poses for a self portrait with wild flowers

Photographer Frank Rodolph





ABOVE: "IN THE GLEN, LAUNDRY FARM, APRIL 30, 1889." *The Melvins and the Masons, the core couples in the Merry Tramps, enjoy some music. During this later—and last documented—excursion, the group did not even leave Oakland, but simply enjoyed a popular picnic spot in their neighborhood.*

FRANK B. RODOLPH PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

FACING PAGE, TOP: "ADMIRING THE PAINTINGS." *In 1884 several amateur female artists among the Merry Tramps display their work. Beside the North Pacific Coast Railroad tracks some of the artists sit on newly fallen trees, seemingly undisturbed by these signs of a booming lumber industry and its consequences for the bucolic natural settings the Merry Tramps loved.*

FRANK B. RODOLPH PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

FACING PAGE, BOTTOM: "VIEW FROM GOAT ISLAND, SAN FRANCISCO BAY." *Not all the artists in the Merry Tramps were amateurs. Marius R. Dahlgren, a prominent landscape painter in the San Francisco Bay Area, accompanied the Tramps on a number of outings. One of his landscapes hangs in the Pardee Home Museum in Oakland.*

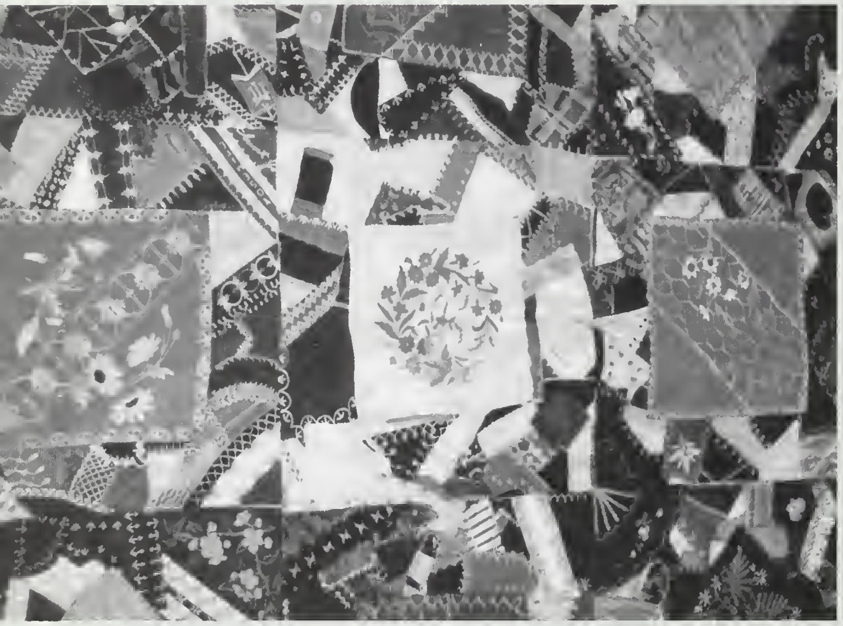
MARIUS DAHLGREN (1844–1920) "VIEW FROM GOAT ISLAND, SAN FRANCISCO BAY," 1887. OIL ON CANVAS
OAKLAND MUSEUM KAHN COLLECTION

PHOTO: M. LEE FATHERREE

A fiery, spirited redhead and the belle of the Merry Tramps, Helen Penniman married her Oakland High School sweetheart, George Pardee, the future governor of California. Helen's family had moved to Oakland from Massachusetts in 1852, while George had been born in San Francisco, the son of a prominent physician and politician. Like his father, George Pardee became a doctor and joined his father's practice. He too was elected mayor of Oakland and then governor of California in 1903, the first American governor to be born in the state.

Pardee ran as a progressive Republican, and a highly partisan biography published shortly after his election noted that Pardee vowed that "this nomination came to me absolutely without a pledge on my part as to my future conduct, except the pledge to give the state, if I am elected, a righteous administration." The biography highlighted the contributions that Helen had made to the campaign:

> "Accompanied only by his devoted wife, he quietly journeyed from place to place, meeting and mingling with the people, asking their opinions and advice. . . . Mrs. Pardee was always among the most interested of



Merry Tramps quilt made by Helen Penniman Pardee.
Courtesy of Pardee Home Museum

> his audiences, whether in the elegant auditoriums of the cities or the remote mining and logging camps of the far Sierras. California is a land of magnificent distances, and together they journeyed many thousands of miles by rail and stage and various other means, in order to visit every part of the state."

rdee is remembered as the governor who man-
ed the state's response to and recovery from the
06 San Francisco earthquake. Although by all
counts he ably handled the disaster, his lack of
rtisanship during his administration did not
dear him to the state's Republicans, and he was
t renominated for the governor's office. Following
s term, he remained active in the state's politics,
rving on the National Conservation Commission
d the California Forestry Board. He was honored
1929 with the naming of Pardee Dam on the
okelumne River. George Pardee died in 1941,
elen Pardee in 1947.

Above: Helen Pardee

Below: George Pardee

Courtesy Pardee Home Museum

eredith Eliassen is the curator of the Marguerite Archer Collection of Historic Children's
aterials at the J. Paul Leonard Library, San Francisco State University. Ms. Eliassen's great-
eat-grandfather Colonel. George Pippy (1857–1921) and George Pardee were friends. As a
ild, her family visited the Pardee Home in Oakland, where she heard many family stories
om Helen and Madeline Pardee (Helen and George's daughters), which made a great
pression on her. Intrigued by Helen's crazy quilt that reminded her of natural patterns on
orest floor, she was inspired to learn more about the Merry Tramps. This project was
mpleted with the generous support of the Glen and Dorothy Dumke Fellowship.

CALIFORNIA'S RECALL

Adoption of the "Grand Bounce" for Elected Officials

By Joshua Spivak

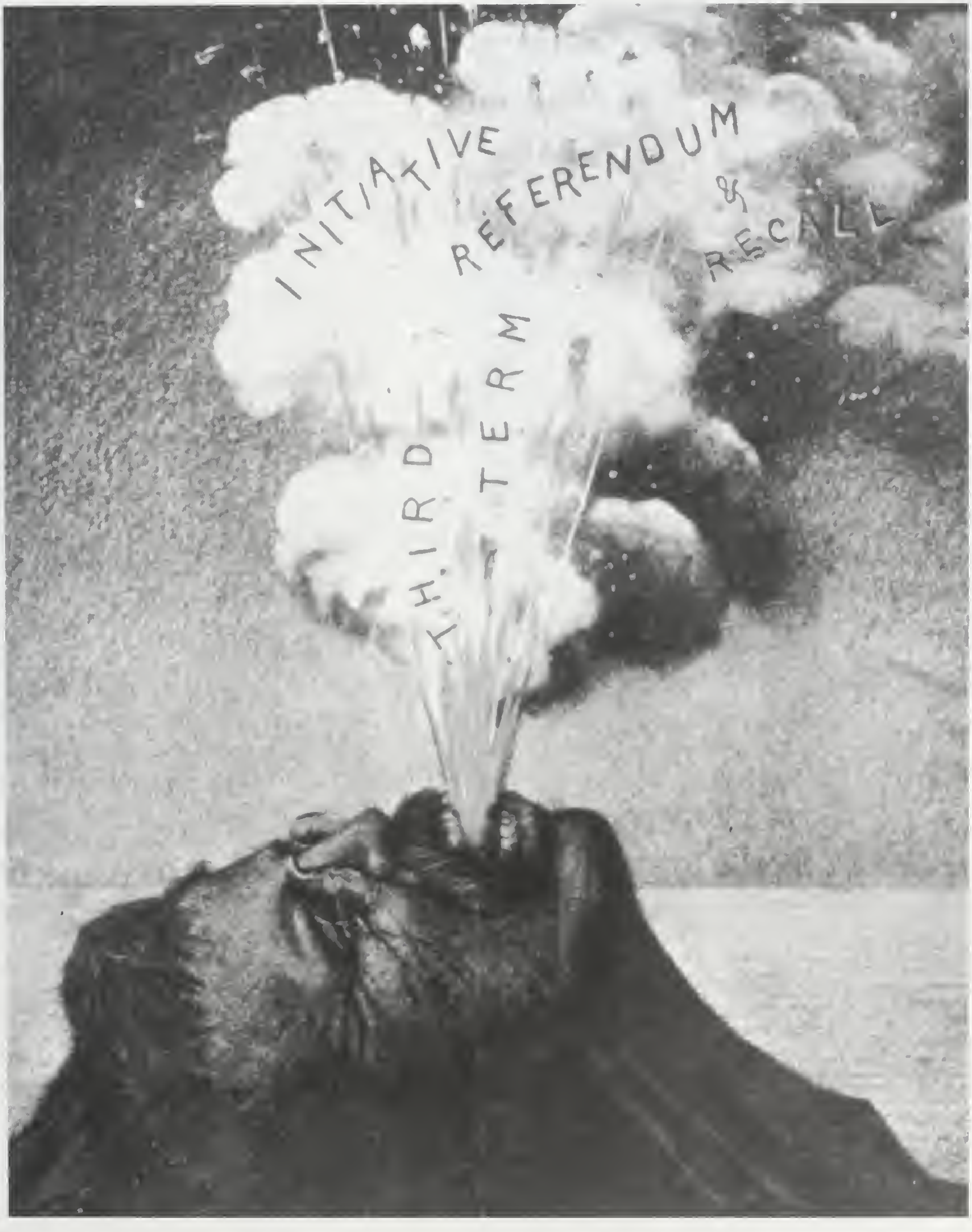
From the completion of the intercontinental railroad system in 1869 until 1910, political life in California was dominated by the railroad industry, and its biggest conglomerate, the Southern Pacific Railroad (popularly known as the "Espee" or "SP"),[1] which was laser-focused on maintaining its profit margin and monopoly on power. One of the leaders of the fight against the railroad, Fremont Older, described the situation in his autobiography:

> **"There was only one kind of politics and that was corrupt politics. It didn't matter whether a man was a Republican or a Democrat. The Southern Pacific Railroad controlled both parties, and he either had to stay out of the game altogether or play it with the railroad."[2]**

Other business leaders, labor groups, and good government movements spent years clamoring for change. However, the Southern Pacific, with its massive war chest and because it dominated the primary means of shipping and travel, was able to crush all comers until the Progressive movement swept the country.

The political reforms, known collectively as the Progressive Movement, encompassed a complex and diffused set of principles, which some historians believe lacked a clearly defined focus.[3] Generally, the Progressives attempted to clean up the moral and political health of the country. Their record, and a list of the reforms they supported, is too long to elaborate here, but in politics, they were strident opponents of big city bosses and powerful interest groups, especially business monopolies. They stressed the delegation of power to the populace, which they believed would prevent corrupt influences from maintaining their hold on power. In order to achieve this goal, the Progressives backed a series of procedural changes to the political system on the national level that included women's suffrage, the primary election, and direct election of senators. The Progressive movement also promoted a three-part state-level reform referred to as "direct legislation" or "direct democracy," which is comprised of the initiative, the referendum, and the recall.

Considered "the chief political legacy of state progressivism,"[4] direct democracy has been adopted in a majority of American states. Twenty-seven states provide for the initiative or popular referendum[5] and thirty-six allow the recall of some officials.[6] The initiative, which allows voters to propose a legislative measure or a constitutional amendment by filing a petition bearing a required number of valid citizen signatures, has had the most widely felt impact among the direct democracy provisions. Since Proposition 13 rolled back property taxes after its passage in 1978, the initiative has been recognized as the major player in determining California's state budget allocation.[7] The referendum, which



California's recall of officeholders was an outgrowth of Progressive reform efforts sweeping the nation in the first decades of the twentieth century. Former president Theodore Roosevelt was one of the most visible and controversial national figures to support reform. The recall was part of his platform as a Progressive ("Bull Moose") Party candidate for president in 1912.

FROM HARPER'S WEEKLY, JUNE 8, 1912. THEODORE ROOSEVELT COLLECTION, HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY allows a legislature to refer a proposed or existing law or statute to the voters for their approval or rejection, also has had an impact on politics throughout the country. However the recall, which allows voters to remove an elected official before his or her term is up, has until recently been neglected. When Governor Gray Davis faced a recall in October 2003, at first many were shocked by its use.[8] But at the time of its adoption it was considered of equal importance by its proponents, and of greater danger by some of its opponents.[9]

Even with its relative lack of use, the recall has been an inherently controversial device in this country, and it has been utilized to validate different beliefs on representation in government. Its backers have argued that it has remained true to its restorative purpose of expanding democracy by focusing power into the majority's hand. These contentions have failed to dislodge the opposition view that the device is both unnecessary and potentially detrimental to responsible government. Opponents continue to echo President William Howard Taft's denunciation of the device as the "'hair trigger' form of government."[10] With the recall shooting to new prominence, debates surrounding its value and wisdom are once again receiving a public hearing. Examination of the California's major recall elections shows that some were launched for reasons that proponents might agree with, while others were more clearly abuses and therefore provides justification for opponents' arguments.

ORIGINS

The recall's origins are uncertain. Some look to ancient times and claim it was "derived historically from Greek and Latin sources. . . ."[11] Modern interpretations focus on Switzerland as the inspiration for the recall, along with the initiative and referendum,[12] though others deny that Switzerland was the basis for America's recall.[13] Almost all writers duly note that the recall was present in the Articles of Confederation government, but the fact is that the device goes back much further.

The recall first appeared in this country in the laws of the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, starting in 1631, and continuing in the Colony's Charter in 1691.[14] Most recall commentators do not mention its colonial history, instead focusing on state constitutions in the Revolutionary War[15] and its presence in the Articles of Confederation government.[16] At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, there was at least one proposal to allow for a recall in the new constitution,[17] and in the ensuing ratifying-conventions, there was significant debate as to whether it should be adopted for U.S. Senators. The New York State Convention spent several days debating the recall with Federalist Alexander Hamilton leading the opposition, saying the recall "will render the senator a slave to all the capricious humors among the people."[18] Many states listed it as a recommendation for amendment to the constitution, but it was never adopted.[19]

Unlike the current recall, many of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century versions involved the removal of an official by another elected body, such as a state legislature recalling its United States Representative in the Articles of Confederation government. While this form of the recall provides a different relationship between the elected official and the general population, the principles and debates remain the same.

Following its failure to get into the U.S. Constitution, the recall went into eclipse for a century. It reappeared on the scene in the 1892 and 1896 platforms of the Socialist-Labor Party and the Populist Party, where it was sometimes called the "imperative mandate."[20] However, mainstream backers of the direct democracy movement did not support the recall. Eltweed Pomeroy, President of the National Direct Legislation League, argued against the recall because it "involves the personal element in a manner allowing for reprisals and political revenge." The recall was not part of the platform at the 1896 Convention of the Direct Legislation League.[21] In 1898, when

South Dakota became the first state to adopt the initiative and referendum, the recall was nowhere to be found, and it was also absent from other states that subsequently adopted direct democracy.[22] It took a Philadelphia-born Los Angeles physician and philanthropist to bring the recall back to life.

REVITALIZATION

Among the leaders of the California branch of the Progressives was Dr. John Randolph Haynes who formed the Direct Legislation League of Los Angeles in 1900. Haynes is widely credited with the recall's resurrection. He first set his sights on Los Angeles, which had spent several years attempting to draft a new charter. Los Angeles had a history with direct democracy provisions. In 1898, in an earlier attempt to revise the charter, the Board of Freeholders accepted the initiative and referendum, but rejected the recall.[23] In 1900, Haynes was elected to the fifteen-member committee for the revision of the Los Angeles charter. As a remedy for the "[i]nefficiency, extravagance and corruption [which] characterise the management of city affairs,"[24] Haynes proposed the initiative, referendum and recall. Though the recall met with some opposition, the Board of Freeholders approved all three provisions.[25] Due to Haynes's stature, the recall received the cautious support of the *Los Angeles Times*. At the time, Haynes was a friend and personal physician to publisher Harrison Gray Otis, though the two would later break off both relationships. The paper nicknamed the recall "The Grand Bounce."[26]

When the voters of Los Angeles finally approved its new charter in 1903 by a four to one vote, the recall made its reappearance on the American scene.[27] It was used several times in the ensuing years, resulting in the removal of Councilman James Davenport and, in 1909, Mayor Arthur "A.C." Harper.[28] Spreading from Los Angeles, about twenty-five other California localities adopted the device. Nationwide, with Progressive champion Theodore Roosevelt in the White House, the direct democracy movement began to blossom. The first state to take up the cause of the recall was Oregon, which had adopted the initiative and referendum several years before the 1908 vote placed the recall as the "final crowning act to complete the temple of popular government. . . . "[29] However, in California, the battle against the railroad for control over the state was still being fought.

A leading California Progressive, Dr. John Randolph Haynes formed the Direct Legislation League of Los Angeles in 1900. As a remedy for what he saw as corruption in L.A. city affairs, Haynes proposed the initiative, referendum and recall as part of the city charter.

Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

The railroads that eventually were combined under the umbrella of the Southern Pacific were formed starting in June 1862, after the passage of a bill that would pay for the construction of the intercontinental railroad. The new constitu-

Mayor A. C. Harper was one of the first officeholders to be recalled after the passage of the Los Angeles city charter in 1903. He left office in 1909 after being accused of encouraging vice and corruption in city hall.

SECURITY PACIFIC COLLECTION
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tion of 1879 enabled the Southern Pacific to firmly establish itself as the major player in the political scene, an "octopus" in the words of a best-selling novel, able to penetrate its tentacles everwhere.[30] Many commentators, including turn-of-the-century Progressives, have echoed George Mowry's pithy pronouncement: "To a degree perhaps unparalleled in the nation, the Southern Pacific and a web of associated economic interests ruled the state."[31] Other, more recent historians have made a more nuanced assessment of the railroad's power, noting that the Southern Pacific was not as monolithic an entity as portrayed by its opponents and that it was defeated on many different occasions, while still acknowledging its control. For example, historian William Deverell writes: "Although the Southern Pacific Railroad did not control events and individuals to the degree that older and newer commentaries have charged, it *was* an extremely powerful entity nonetheless."[32] The Southern Pacific's reach extended from the governor's office down, and included political parties and the judiciary. However, their use of power created a backlash.

Other business interests argued that the oppressive hand of the Southern Pacific caused the state's economic position to stagnate. These business interests, in conjunction with the nascent Progressive movement, provided the thrust for opposition to the political leadership in California. In order to provide an organization to wage the battle, leaders of the reform movement founded the Lincoln-Roosevelt League in Los Angeles in 1907.[33] Despite victories, such as the conviction of San Francisco boss Abraham Ruef in corruption trials,[34] the reformers were not able to make great progress.[35] Historian Spencer Olin explained their dilemma: "The Lincoln-Roosevelt League would remain but a potentially dangerous irritant to the Southern Pacific machine unless it could place its own candidate in the governor's chair."[36]

The gubernatorial election in 1910 provided just such an opportunity. The Democratic Party had fielded Theodore Bell as a reform candidate for governor in 1906, and he had run a strong race in losing to James Gillett, the Southern Pacific choice. Bell based his 1906 campaign around the railroad's domination of California.[37] Aware of California's Republican leanings, reformers looked for an impressive candidate to win the 1910 Republican primary. After some searching, they finally convinced Hiram Johnson, the second prosecutor in the San Francisco graft trials that convicted Boss Ruef,[38] to accept the position. While at first extremely reluctant to be the League's standard bearer,[39] Johnson proved to be an excellent choice, running his campaign like a single-issue crusade, with the message that he was going to "kick the Southern Pacific out of politics."

Johnson ran on the Lincoln-Roosevelt platform, which included adoption of the direct democracy provisions. In California's first direct primary, the Southern Pacific's hegemony cracked, as Johnson defeated four candidates to take the Republican nomination, and carried many Progressives to victory on his coattails. Johnson then faced off against Bell, once again the Democratic nominee. The candidates shared views on the railroad and on Progressivism. While Bell had the advantage of previous experience, "Johnson was conducting a more flamboyant campaign than Bell and had a more disciplined party apparatus, thoroughly under the control of the Lincoln-Roosevelt League."[40] Johnson was also more than willing to accuse fellow Progressive Bell of accepting the support of the Southern Pacific,[41] a strategy that helped him win the election 177,000 to 155,000.

Hiram Johnson ran for governor of California in 1910 on a strong reform platform. Johnson, in his inaugural speech, set the tone for the state legislature by asking: "How best can we arm the people to protect themselves hereafter?"

Courtesy Bancroft Library,
University of California Berkeley

One of the most noteworthy sessions in the history of the California state legislature followed the 1910 election. According to Franklin Hichborn, one of the leading Progressive journalists covering the California Legislature, Johnson wiped out partisan politics: "There was to be no Republican policies nor Democratic policies, only administration policies."[42] Hiram Johnson, in his inaugural speech, set the tone for the legislature by asking: "How best can we arm the people to protect themselves hereafter?"[43] The legislature answered with the direct democracy provisions. The initiative and referendum were easily approved. The recall, however, ran into some trouble.

JUDICIAL RECALL CONTROVERSY

While there was general agreement to adopt the recall for use against executive and legislative elective officials, there was bitter debate about its use in the judicial branch. Most Progressives considered it critical to extend the recall to judges, since abuses of judicial power helped maintain the success of the Southern Pacific machine. Mowry wrote: "As for the state judiciary, it was the considered opinion of Dr. John R. Haynes that the Southern Pacific's domination of no other arm of government was as complete or pernicious."[44] This anti-judicial bent was also the position of many Progressives nation-wide.[45] The actions of the United States' Supreme Court inflamed the Progressives, as one history of the Supreme Court said of the Court's actions of the time: "Instead of confining itself to the question of whether a legislative power was constitutional, the Supreme Court increasingly concerned itself with the wisdom of legislation."[46]

Unless they could eliminate what they saw as judicial arrogance in the face of the will of the people, Progressive leaders thought their reforms would be neither safe nor complete. The anti-court argument also fit right into the Progressive philosophy of devolving power to the public. Governor Johnson said that: "Under an elective system the Recall should be applied to all officers. It will make no judge weaker, nor a strong judge less strong. It will be a warning and a menace to the corrupt only."[47]

However, by attacking the court, the Progressives ran right up against a cherished American political doctrine, namely judicial independence. Many politicians, both conservative and progressive, felt that the country must have "judges with courage to decide against the majority. . . . "[48] Opponents of the recall, sensing the futility of opposing the adoption of the device as a whole, realized that judicial recall offered the best target. Hichborn noted "no sooner had the administration taken up recall legislation, then strong opposition to the recall of the Judiciary developed in the ranks of the progressives themselves."[49] Charles Wheller, a leading Progressive Republican, described the recall of the judiciary as a "strike at the very foundation of the government in which I live. . . . "[50]

The furor over this issue led the Committee on Direct Legislation, which framed the constitutional amendments for the Republican State Central Committee, to leave judicial recall out of the original draft.[51] The fight heartened the conservative opposition, as the *Los Angeles Times* said, "the sentiment here is strongly against going to that extreme (the inclusion of the recall of judges). . . . "[52]

The topic of judicial recall led to an "oratorical duel" in a hearing with nearly all the members of the legislature present. Wheller squared off against Progressive hero and original San Francisco graft prosecutor, Francis Heney, in a widely reported exchange. Wheller painted the issue in the strongest terms, saying that the acceptance of the judicial recall "will mean the last of the republic of our fathers when you pass this bill, for we will pass from a constitutional democracy built by them, to a pure democracy and all its dangers."[53] Heney's speech was heavily quoted by the anti-Progressive *Los Angeles Times*, which titled its front-page story "Heney Violently Assails the United States Constitution." According to the *Times*, Heney spent his time questioning the basis of the constitution, with such arguments as: "The right of the Supreme Court to pass on the constitutionality of the acts of Congress was a stolen right."[54] Other observers described Heney as citing the Supreme Court's repeal of the income tax, a highly controversial decision, as a prime example of the need for judicial recall. This decision in *Pollock v. Farmers' Loan and Trust Company* (1895) was a direct challenge to one of the central tenets of Progressivism, the redistribution of wealth.[55] In the eyes of many Progressives, the court had proved itself the tool of moneyed interests. While Progressive opponents of the judicial recall acknowledged the ignominy of the income tax decision, it did not justify subjecting judges to such an extreme remedy. Wheeler called the income tax decision the beginning of the loss of confidence in the judiciary, but stressed that there already existed sufficient methods to remove judges.[56]

Judicial recall appeared to be in trouble. In a January 17, 1911 letter to Dr. Haynes, Governor Johnson expressed "grave doubts" on the likelihood of the judicial recall being adopted.[57] Despite all of these problems, the judicial provisions survived. The tide was turned by the actions of the state's Supreme Court itself. Four members of the court signed an order granting a rehearing of prison sentences in the San Francisco graft trials. Details of the court's decision started coming to light while the recall was being debated. Justice Henshaw, already infamous for his closeness to the Southern Pacific, had signed the order and went on vacation "without considering the briefs which had been filed in the case."[58] This led to an uproar against the court and spurred the legislature into action. "[Assemblyman] John C. March, Sacramento, declared that until the last ten days he was against the recall of the judiciary, but the events of the last two weeks have changed his mind. . . . "[59] The legislature quickly began investigating impeachment charges against the justices,[60] and adopted the recall, including the judicial aspect. In the Senate and the Assembly combined, 106 legislators voted for the recall and fourteen members against. Hichborn cited the vote for the recall as "unique."

Los Angeles Mayor Frank Shaw was removed from office by recall in 1938. His administration was considered by some to be the most corrupt in the city's history. Shaw, at left, shakes hands with his successor, Chester Bowron, as he leaves office.

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"Every member of both houses voted for or against the judicial recall measure. Seldom, if ever, has the entire vote of the California legislature been cast for a measure . . . Never before, probably, had a measure before the California legislature been so thoroughly argued and discussed."[61]

The direct democracy provisions still had to be approved by the voters. In the ensuing campaign, many conservatives were unwavering in their opposition to the recall. Leading the charge in California was the *Los Angeles Times*, which repeatedly referred to the direct democracy provisions as "freak legislation."[62] According to the *Times*, the passage of the recall "show[ed the] remarkable caprice of ballot wielders."[63] Interestingly enough, despite its hatred for Progressivism, the newspaper was a leading opponent of the Southern Pacific.[64]

The Progressive reforms were brought to the people to approve in October 1911, with twenty-three amendments on the ballot, including such notables as women's suffrage and all three direct democracy provisions.[65] Twenty-two of the amendments passed, with the recall garnering the second largest vote total.

In the following years, the recall received several tests. While Haynes felt that "the only fault that can be charged against it (direct legislation) is a somewhat excessive conservatism,"[66] three recall elections took place against state legislators within the first three years of its adoption. However, the recall of Senator Edwin E. Grant showed the Progressives that the device was a double-edged sword.

THE RECALL IN ACTION

Since its inception, there have been thousands of recalls attempted, nearly all on the local level. Two of the most noteworthy have involved leading California political figures. San Francisco Mayor Diane Feinstein triumphed in a recall vote in 1983, using the argument that the device should not be used for simple policy disagreements and that her recall was a waste of money.[67] In the early 1980s, four attempts were made to recall Rose Bird, Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, and two other justices. While none of the petitions succeed in forcing a vote, Bird was eventually ousted from office b other electoral means that many commentators since have erroneously assumed was a recall.[6 Despite the intense debate over extending the recall to the judiciary, no judge has been removed since 1932, and very few were remov before then.[69] In Los Angeles, the largest muni ipality in the country to have the recall, four mayors have faced recall elections, and two were removed.[70] However, very few recalls have taken place against state officials.

Before the recall of Gray Davis, there were thirty one attempted recalls of California governors, none of which made the ballot.[71] There have been at least 117 recall attempts of state legislators, of which sixty-five have been undertake since 1986.[72] However, only seven of those endeavors succeeded in actually forcing a vote. The first three took place in the three years immediately after the adoption of the recall. The last four have occurred within the last decade.

The recall's first use on the state level was in reaction to corruption. In 1912, Senator Marsha Black, a progressive Republican from Santa Clar was indicted for embezzling funds from the Pal Alto Mutual Building and Loan Association.[7 After the Republican County Central Committee' resolution calling on Marshall to resign was disregarded,[74] the committee launched a successfu recall. According to reports, "an unusually sma vote was cast"[75] at the January 2, 1913 election. Histories of the recall do not delve further into the matter.

A second recall, later in the same year, was somewhat more interesting, as it was not against a corrupt politician, but, according to recal historians Fredrick Bird and Frances Ryan, it was launched by labor groups as a "test of the effectiveness of the recall against an unfaithfu legislator who fails to live up to preelection promises and platform pledges."[76] Senator James Owens, a Democrat, had made pledges to support certain labor positions, which labor believed he violated. Bird and Ryan referred to Owens as "one of the weakest and most recalcitrant members of either house." This was not the first recall Owens had faced, as he had successfully fended off a recall when he served as a Councilman.[77]

The campaign showed the danger of interest groups using the recall as a disciplinary tool. The Democratic Party backed Owens. Rather than proving labor's strength, "(t)he alignment of forces in the recall campaign was conclusive proof that labor planks in a party platform are not always to be taken too seriously. . . . "[78] Senator Owens managed to fight off the recall by the comfortable margin of 6,749 to 5,177.

The third recall, against progressive Democrat Senator Edwin E. Grant, was more complex than the other two, as several motives may have been at work. The stated reason for the recall was failure to represent the views of the district. But the desire by a political machine to punish an errant senator is viewed as the real motivation, although another motive, a desire by a losing candidate to reverse an election, might have had a part in this recall as well.

In the 1912 Senate election, Grant defeated incumbent Eddie Wolfe, one of the leaders of the San Francisco conservatives, by ninety-five votes. Not long afterwards, recall petitions began to circulate. According to Progressive writers and newspapers, the recall was started due to Grant's opposition to "vice conditions" with his sponsoring of the Redlight Abatement Act.[79] This earned him the enmity of the still potent political machine in San Francisco. The petition circulated against Grant did not cite the Redlight Abatement Act, because, according to Bird and Ryan, "to recall a state senator for having opposed vice conditions did not seem possible even in San Francisco. . . . "[80] Rather it emphasized his votes on three bills: one prohibited the sale of liquor at the Panama-Pacific Exposition (votes in favor of prohibition could be considered an act of political suicide in wet San Francisco); a second, which he opposed,

San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein triumphed in a recall vote in 1983, using the argument that the device should not be used for simple policy disagreements and that her recall was a waste of money.

Courtesy Senator Dianne Feinstein

would have prevented most marriages from being solemnized until five days after the issuance of a license; the third, which he also opposed, would have given California authors and publishers preference over those from other states in the preparation and publication of school books.

The recall process was clouded with controversy. Twice, the recall petitions failed, once because the signatures burned, the other time because of forged or irregular signatures. On the third petition the anti-Grant group was finally able to get the recall on the ballot. This petition was also contested, though through a variety of questionable means that later lead to a Senate investigation, the recall election was certified and went forward.

The man who declared his candidacy for the seat was former Senator Eddie Wolfe. Progressive reporter Franklin Hichborn claimed "some of those who were circulating petitions against Grant had stated the petition 'was to put Wolfe back in the Senate in place of Grant.'"[81] This aspect of the recall, the reversal of an election verdict, is not discussed in depth in the writings on the Grant election. The infrequency of the procedure's use in California leads to the understanding that attempts to remove an official for the solitary reason of overturning an election would not succeed. The Grant recall was tied into the Progressive politics of the state. The *Los Angeles Times* denounced Grant as "one of Gov. Johnson's subservient henchmen . . . ."[82] Grant's supporters argued that the recall would decide whether "forces of vice" would regain control and also cited the cost of the "unnecessary expense" of the recall as a reason to vote for Grant.[83] On October 8, 1914, by a 531-vote margin, Grant was recalled and Wolfe elected in his place. A little over fifty percent of the district voted in the election. Progressives denounced the vote, but the *Los Angeles Times*, committed opponent to the Progressive cause, rejoiced in Grant's defeat and wrongly predicted problems for the Progressives and Governor Hiram Johnson in the upcoming election.[84] Grant protested the election based on irregularities in the petitions. Progressives like Hichborn scorned the Senate committee that investigated and dismissed the matter, and argued that the investigation was incomplete.

The recall of Grant and other uses of direct democracy provisions by opponents of the Progressives brought calls for changes in the procedure. In his message to the legislature, Johnson called for action saying: "It would be idle to deny . . . that certain abuses have arisen . . . It is our duty to remedy those abuses. . . . "[85] Without specific guidelines on how to revise the recall, the legislature stumbled to a solution. The first idea was to split the recall and the selection of a new officer into two separate elections. Haynes strenuously objected to this change and claimed that the problems lay in the failure of local officials to enforce the law.[86] Eventually, the legislature settled for a token change of increasing the penalty for forging a name on a petition.

The recall against Grant was the last recall to get on the ballot against a state official for generations. This drought of recalls also existed on a nation-wide level. From 1922 till 1971, only one state official was recalled throughout the country.[87] The more partisan nature of the state-level recall is explained by one political scientist as the reason for its lack of use: "Signing a petition for recall is often more than repudiating a single state official–it is also a rejection of his or her party."[88]

LEGISLATIVE RECALL BATTLES OF 1994–1995

After a nearly eighty-year absence from state-level political battles, the recall came back with a vengeance during the legislative sessions of 1994–95. Three assembly members and one senator faced recall elections in this period and two were removed. The surge of recalls was in part due to the historic election results of 1994. For the first time since 1954, the Republican Party managed to capture control of both houses of the United States Congress. The party also won a majority of the gubernatorial elections throughout the country. In California, in addition to reelecting Pete Wilson as governor, the Republican Party had managed to obtain a majority in the Assembly. The parliamentary maneuvering that ruled the new Assembly led to the recall gaining an important role in the political process.

The fourth recall took place in the heightened political climate just before the 1994 election. It was launched against Senate President Pro Tempore and Democratic leader David Roberti who was finishing up his last term in the Senate, and running for state treasurer. Roberti was a leader in passing a ban on semiautomatic assault weapons in 1989, and was a major supporter of gun control initiatives. This angered anti-gun control forces, which decided to make a test case of Roberti. Despite the fact that he was being "termed out" as Senator, the gun lobby felt it would be able to send a message with a recall campaign before the 1994 elections. The Roberti recall drew national attention as a test of the strength of the gun lobby.[89] As the turnout for a recall or other special election was expected to be low, the anti-Roberti forces looked to have a good chance at success if they could mobilize their constituency.[90] Despite the fact that the first condition was met with only a twenty-five percent turnout, Roberti easily defeated the recall on April 12, 1994, garnering fifty-nine percent of the vote.

Commentators had a mixed impression of the recall's impact. While Roberti failed in his bid for the Democratic nomination for State Treasurer in June, the recall's effect on this race was uncertain. Roberti argued that the recall was a major factor in his loss, as he had to spend $800,000 to keep his position, and the recall was blamed for draining his campaign funds.[91] Furthermore, Roberti said: "It tied me down to the valley. Normally you don't work your district in a statewide race. You've got to make friends in other parts of the state."[92] However, other observers saw the issue differently. Prior to the recall, Roberti was thought to be a "tired commodity," running against a deep-pocketed candidate who won the support of both of California's U.S. Senators.[93] According to this view, the recall gave his campaign new life, albeit one that did not last long.

As an attempt by an interest group to punish an opponent, the recall did not succeed. A National Rifle Association lobbyist argued that the recall attempt had helped weaken support for gun control bills.[94] However, later successes of anti-gun control forces probably had more to do with Republican victories in the November election than with any fear the Roberti recall instilled in legislators.

There were two postscripts to this recall. First, in November, California voters approved a proposition slightly revising the recall law.[95] Second, the organization that waged the campaign against Roberti, Californians Against Corruption, was charged with hiding the sources of donations, and was fined by the State Fair Political Practices Commission a record-breaking $800,000 for the violations.[96]

The Roberti recall was but a prelude to one of the most bizarre sessions of the California legislature, one in which the long-time Democratic leader of the Assembly proved his final mastery over his Republican adversaries, and one in which the recall became a partisan tool to maintain party loyalty and seek control over the state government.

The "mania for recall elections,"[97] as the *California Journal* put it, began with a political earthquake: the election of 1994. The Republican Party scored across-the-board victories, the likes of which they had not seen in a generation. In addition to their national successes, the Republican Party retained the California governorship and succeeded in gaining a razor-thin forty-one to thirty-nine seat majority in the California Assembly, their first majority in twenty-five years. The Republicans expected to be able to elect their own leader as speaker, an enormously powerful position in the Assembly.[98] They would finally be able to topple their Democratic nemesis, Speaker Willie Brown, who had served in that position for the previous fourteen years. The Democrats were focused on stopping Jim Brulte, the Republican leader, whom they considered an extremely effective leader, from gaining the speakership.[99] However, due to the casting of one Republican vote for the Democratic candidate for speaker, the Assembly was tied and eventually, through further political maneuvers,[100] re-elected Willie Brown to the speakership.

Infuriated Republicans looked to the recall as a way to revitalize their political fortunes. They immediately filed several recall attempts, and were able to place two recalls on the ballots: one against the renegade Republican Assemblyman, Paul Horcher, who voted for the Democratic candidate for Speaker and declared himself an independent, and the other against a Democrat, Michael Machado, who promised to be "an independent voice"[101] in the Assembly during his campaign.

The Republicans quickly focused their fire on Horcher. Governor Pete Wilson, a long time opponent of Brown, said, "voters will not stand for politicians who seek to maintain the status quo at the expense of working Californians' desire for change."[102] The Democrats attempted to portray Horcher as an independent-minded reformer, with little success. Horcher, who had turned his back on his party and whose recall was essentially viewed as an attempt to enforce party discipline, was defeated on May 16, 1995, by a margin of sixty-three to thirty-seven percent. Voter turnout was thirty-three percent, a significant amount for any special election; absentee ballots totaled fifty-three percent of the vote cast, sixty-nine percent of which went against Horcher.[103]

The second recall was against conservative Democratic Assemblyman Mike Machado, who held a marginal seat, and whom Republicans said "lied to his constituents by telling them he would not vote for Brown."[104] The *San Francisco Chronicle*, in denouncing the attempt, described the rationale for the recall by saying: "he actually voted for the leader of his own party to be speaker of the Assembly."[105] This was also a prime example of an attempt to rerun the last election, as the person who finished first in the balloting to replace Machado if the recall was successful was the same person Machado beat in the previous election.[106] Republican Assemblyman Bernie Richter, criticizing the recall attempt against Machado as "banana republic," said: "It was an attack on the validity of the election results."[107] Helped by the fact that Brown had already left the speakership by the time of the recall vote, the voters rejected the logic behind Machado's recall on August 22, 1995, choosing to retain him 31,209 to 18,068. In his previous election, Machado won by 1,764 votes.[108]

After Horcher was recalled and replaced, though before the Machado recall, an increasingly embittered and divided Republican caucus looked as if the party finally had a lock on gaining control over the Assembly. In June, however, in what was referred to as "a stunning farewell display of political power,"[109] Brown once again proved his mastery over the Republicans, as he maneuvered to elect Doris Allen, an embittered Republican backbencher, to the Speakership and had himself named to the newly created position of Speaker Emeritus.[110]

Allen, who was considered "woefully inadequate"[111] by opinion writers, and compared to the "Vichy French"[112] by Republicans for collaborating with Democrats, was immediately threatened with a recall. As in the Horcher recall, the strategy quickly paid dividends. Her few Repubican supporters in the Assembly began to desert her. "The more that the GOP can show Allen siding with Democrats, the more ammunition they hope to accumulate for a recall effort. . . . "[113]

Before the recall of Allen took place, Allen gave up the speakership in favor of another Republican, Brian Setencich. In the campaign that followed, Allen was quickly painted into a corner by her betrayal of the Republicans. On November 28, 1995, Allen was handily defeated, sixty-five to thirty-five percent, with a turnout around twenty-six percent of registered voters. The Republicans then managed to oust Setencich through parliamentary means and finally elect their new party leader, Curt Pringle, as Speaker.

The Republican participants of the legislative battles faced negative repercussions. They lost control over the Assembly in the 1996 elections and have not regained it since; Assemblyman Setencich lost a primary election;[114] aides to the Republican Speaker Pringle were indicted for misuse of offices in the Allen and Horcher recall;[115] Governor Pete Wilson was threatened with a recall campaign by Jesse Jackson that was referred to as a "caricature . . . of the populist nuttiness in which California's government . . . has become stuck."[116] Wilson embarked upon a failed presidential run in 1996. Former Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, however, escaped unscathed from the recall problems and won election as Mayor of San Francisco.

The results of the four recent recalls are not surprising. By accepting their party's ballot line in the election, Horcher and Allen were not just being elected as individuals, but as Republicans. Their actions, which helped keep the Democrats in power, could be viewed as a clear party betrayal. On the other hand, the two failed recalls were based on issues that the elected representatives had publicly held. Both Roberti and Machado managed strong showings in the recall elections they faced. Observers were uncertain as to what the future would hold for the recall. During the battles, Mike Schroder, vice-chairman of the Republican Party, predicted, "recalls won't be unusual in five years."[117] History proved Schroder wrong, though perhaps not by much.

OVERNOR GRAY DAVIS

The recall took on new life when it was used to oust the highest-ranking officer in California, Governor Gray Davis, in October 2003. This event, and the subsequent election of actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, stunned Americans, many of whom were caught unaware by the power of the recall. Previous to Davis, only one governor throughout the entire country ever faced a recall vote.[118]

Despite its undeniable significance, what follows is only a broad overview of the Davis recall, presenting a few relevant highlights.[119] One of the obvious questions is why Davis was recalled. There is no simple reason to cite, except that nearly all commentators agree that Davis's own personality was a major factor.[120] Among the more popular arguments for the recall include: failure to properly manage the state's budget,[121] the energy crisis,[122] right wing conspiracy,[123] and incompetence. One columnist claimed that Davis was in the pocket of special interests, and tied his downfall to the anti-SP movement that begat the recall.[124] Others felt the recall was an outcome of unprecedented voter anger at the political system.[125]

The reaction to the recall petitioning was illustrative of the recall's heretofore-marginal place on the political spectrum. Many commentators expressed shock at the unheralded recall, and ironically, in light of the hyper-democratic anti-recall arguments of Hamilton, Taft and others, complained that the recall itself was an undemocratic device.[126] One of the reasons for the argument that the recall is undemocratic is the belief that the eventual winner of the replacement election, who had to win only a plurality in a crowded field, would receive significantly fewer votes than Davis would in the recall vote (Davis was not allowed to run in the replacement portion of the recall). These fears proved unfounded, as the high voter turnout caused Schwarzenegger's vote total to top Davis' performance from either the 2003 recall or the 2002 election.

The origins of the Davis recall are a matter for some debate. Credit has been awarded to talk radio programs, as a conservative political activist named Ted Costa started the recall on a talk radio show, and other programs were instrumental in rallying support for the petition drive. This was not Costa's first foray into recall politics, as he was a supporter of the Roberti recall, and an opponent of the Machado one.[127] However, some Republican leaders were contemplating a recall before that time, even though the national

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger shakes hands at his inauguration in November 2003 with former Governor Gray Davis. The Davis recall was the apex of a recent nationwide revival. More state officials have been recalled since 1971 than in the previous sixty-three years of the recall's existence.

© Pool/Corbis

Republicans appeared to be wary of a potential boomerang effect.[128] Despite the credit these early activists received in later narratives, their efforts seemed to be sputtering,[129] until Republican Representative Darrell Issa pledged millions of dollars to pay for enough signature gatherers necessary to get the measure on the ballot.[130] This turned out to be the critical moment in the recall's success.

As can be seen by the thirty-one failed gubernatorial recall attempts, qualifying the recall for placement on the ballot represents a major hurdle. Once on the ballot, the recall has a fairly good chance of succeeding, as evidenced by the four out of seven removal rate for state legislators. The Davis recall had one significant advantage rooted in the device's origins, namely the state's low signature requirement. When the recall law was written in 1911, there was no focus on the signature requirements. The original Los Angeles law called for signatures of eligible voters equal to twenty-five percent of the vote from the last election for the office facing the recall. Other municipalities varied the total, with Long Beach requiring forty percent and San Francisco requiring ten percent of the vote for mayor.[131] The 1911 amendment adopting the recall for officials elected to statewide office required the gathering of voter signatures equaling twelve percent of the total vote in the last election for the office, plus one percent in each county.[132] Judging from contemporary accounts, there did not appear to be much discussion about this provision, though there was debate about signature requirements for the initiative.[133] Today, the twelve percent requirement is the lowest barrier for any state with the recall. Due to California's large population, this is still a high hurdle; in aggregate number of signatures, it is possibly higher than any other state. However, the 2002 California gubernatorial election had the lowest voter turnout for a governor's race in history. Fifty percent of registered voters, and only thirty-six percent of eligible voters went to the polls that day. Therefore, the number of signatures needed to get on the ballot was proportionally lower than ever.

The early anti-recall arguments were threefold: One was that recalling Davis would be an illegitimate use of the recall. This argument was based on the ahistorical position that the recall was solely intended to depose corrupt officials.[134] A second argument presented was that the recall was a waste of money, a tactic that had proven successful in Dianne Feinstein's successful defense of her San Francisco mayoralty in 1983 and in the Machado recall, though it did not help Grant.[135] A third defense was that the recall was a part of a Republican "conspiracy" to gain political power without electoral success.[136] This argument was frequently tied in with the impeachment of President Bill Clinton and the disputed 2000 election in order to maximize Democratic anger, boost party-faithful turnout, and thereby use the Democratic registration advantage to ward off the recall.[137] None of these arguments proved particularly successful.

When the recall got onto the ballot, candidates of all stripes started entering the race. Minimal requirements to get placed on the ballot, gathering sixty-five signatures and paying $3,500, resulted in 135 diverse candidates entering the race. The serious contenders included Republicans Schwarzenegger, Issa, former major league baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth, Bill Simon (the man Davis defeated in the 2002 election), and conservative state Senator Thomas McClintock. In order to focus the campaign on a partisan angle, Davis attempted to keep the big name Democrats, such as Senator Dianne Feinstein, out of the race, though Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante, who had an icy relationship with Davis, jumped in. In the end, most of the big name Republican candidates dropped out before the vote, leaving only Schwarzenegger and McClintock to battle for the party's base. The Republicans were concerned about the possibility that McClintock would siphon support from the far more popular Schwarzenegger, and allow Bustamante to triumph, but in the end, such concerns were unfounded.

The campaign that followed shared many bizarre facets, which will undoubtedly provide source material for entertaining studies to come. Several court cases were fought, with the end result allowing the recall to proceed, although one case led to a change in the law permitting any voter who casts a ballot against the recall to be able to vote in the replacement election. When the dust settled on October 7, 2003, Davis was recalled by fifty-five percent of the vote, and Schwarzenegger was elected to replace him. Schwarzenegger garnered forty-eight percent of the vote, Bustamante received thirty-one percent and McClintock thirteen percent. Sixty percent of voters turned out for the election, a significantly larger percentage than had elected Davis, although fewer than voted in the 2000 presidential election.[138]

It is difficult and potentially dubious to draw out lessons, patterns and historical comparisons from this uniquely interesting recall. The presence of a popular figure such as Schwarzenegger, and the Republicans' willingness to coalesce around him, unbalances some of the possible patterns. With this preface, there are two candidates whose failures are particularly worthy of comment: Darrell Issa and Bill Simon.

As the first major figure to provide serious financial support to the recall, Issa should have been viewed as a serious candidate. He had already run for the Republican nomination for the Senate in 1998. However, it does not seem that Issa gained any credibility by being the first prominent backer of the recall. Many saw his financial backing as a backdoor way to gain the governorship. Issa proved unable to translate his sponsorship of the recall effort into popular support, and dropped out.[139]

In 2002, Simon had been the surprise Republican candidate for governor, defeating the popular former mayor of Los Angeles, Richard Riordan and then losing in a bitterly fought close race to Gray Davis. As the party's most recent standard-bearer just a year before, Simon might have been the party's logical choice. However, he was considered an incompetent campaigner, and was unable to make headway in the 135-person scrum.

"The Davis recall was simply the apex of a recent nation-wide revival. More state officials have been recalled since 1971 than in the previous sixty-three years of the recall's existence. In the last decade, two states have adopted the recall for statewide officers."[141]

Simon was not able to mobilize the conservative base that helped him capture the Republican nomination in 2002. His failure is another argument against employing the recall to rerun an election. With the exception of the Grant recall, the tactic of using the device to reverse a result has not proven successful.[140]

The Davis recall was simply the apex of a recent nation-wide revival. More state officials have been recalled since 1971 than in the previous sixty-three years of the recall's existence. In the last decade, two states have adopted the recall for statewide officers.[141] According to a recent study, over sixty percent of American cities now allow for the recall, which exceeds the total possessing the initiative and referendum,[142] and a 1987 study found that the recall "has been used more often in the past twenty-five years than at any time since its inception during the progressive era."[143] In October, following the Davis recall, state Senator Gary George of Wisconsin was recalled, representing the second senator recalled in the state in the last seven years.[144] People in other states have talked about recalling their governors.[145] There has also been some discussion of bringing the recall to the national level. A 1987 poll run by the Twentieth Century Fund found popular support for the extension of the recall to federal officials.[146] In 1996, Representative Peter Hoekstra introduced a package of "Voter's Bill of Rights," which would include recalls for Senators and Congressmen, and there have been occasional calls to recall U.S. Senators.[147] Also in 1996, Republican Presidential Candidate Patrick Buchanan advocated adopting the recall for the federal judiciary.[148] While there does not appear to be any real threat of the recall being adopted for federal officials, the fact that candidates use it to score political points highlights its revival.

CONCLUSION

The recall's precise origins may be a matter for debate, but the reason for its creation is not: to make officials more responsive to the electorate. The Articles of Confederation government, like the Massachusetts Bay Colony before it, wanted the electorate, be it the state legislature or the populace, to have more control over officials than regular elections would provide. The pendulum swung against this tight control in the Constitutional Convention, and it was not until the Progressives that the recall was resurrected as a tool to remove what they saw as a corrupt and incompetent leadership, wholly captured by a special interest group. Since its reintroduction, the recall has occupied a marginal place in American political history. Unlike its direct democracy brethren, it has not succeeded in catching the imagination of the population. The Davis recall may have changed that, but not in the way its Progressive proponents had imagined.

Haynes and other Progressives thought that the recall and other direct democracy devices would become valuable tools in fighting the corrupting influences of special interests. On occasion, mainly on the local level, the recall has performed this task. Some have argued that the Davis recall is a prime example of this use. In general, however, as experience has shown, the recall has been used for other purposes. In the

Horcher, Machado, and Allen recalls, and some would also argue, in the Davis and Grant recalls, political parties hoped to grasp power that otherwise eluded them. In other cases, such as attempts against Roberti and Owens, interest groups have used the device simply to push their own agendas.

A combination of factors points to a strong probability of an increase in recalls in coming years. The slide in voter turnout, combined with an efficient signature gathering industry, has made it easier than ever to get a recall on the ballot. Attracting electoral support for the recall is also easier, as party affiliation has decreased throughout the state, removing yet another barrier to garnering support for a recall campaign. Once on the ballot, the recall has proven successful in five out of eight cases. Perhaps most importantly, deep-pocketed interest groups are willing to get directly involved in political battles. In California, the initiative process has already been taken over by interest groups. The time may be coming where the modern day equivalents of the Southern Pacific Railroad regularly promote the "Grand Bounce."

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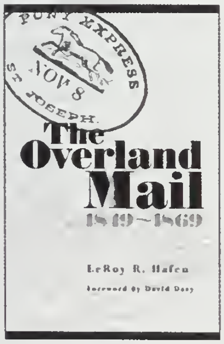

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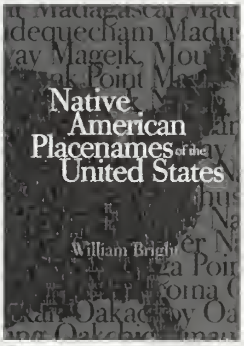

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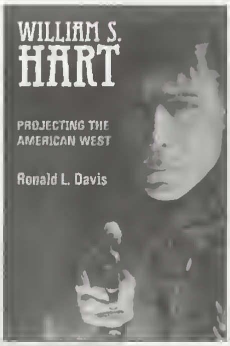

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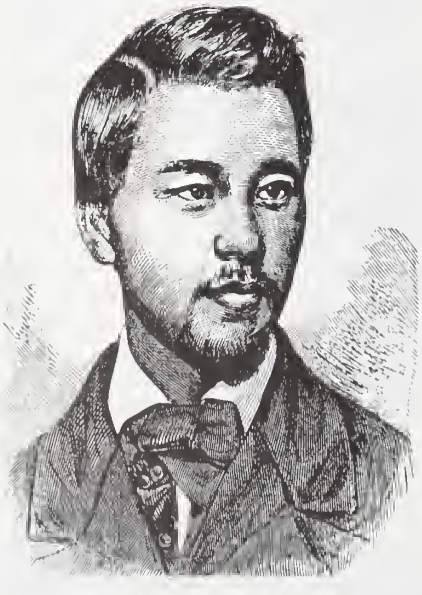
GOLDEN GATE CASTAWAY

Joseph Heco and San Francisco, 1851–1859

By Robert F. Oaks

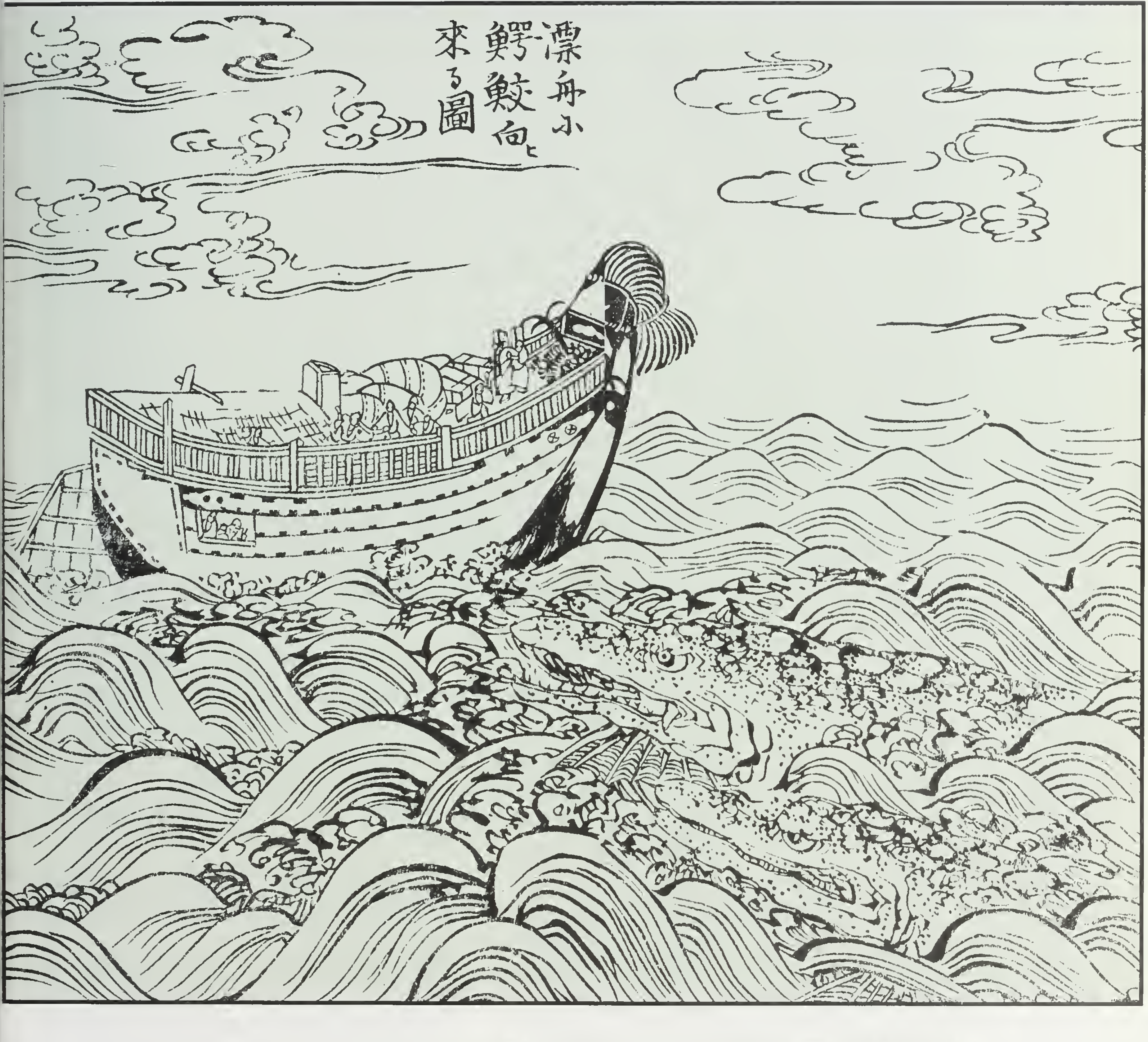
Late in October 1850, the Japanese junk *Eiriki-maru*, after delivering its cargo to Edo (Tokyo), departed for its return trip to Hiogo (now part of Kobe). On the evening of the fourth day, rain began to fall, engulfing the ship in a gale. There was a brief respite, and then winds began anew, ripping the sails from the mast.

The youngest member of the crew was a fourteen-year old boy named Hikozo, subsequently called Joseph Heco. Hikozo and his sixteen fellow crew members would not set foot on land for more than three months. That land would be in San Francisco, and before these men and boys found their way back to Japan several years later, their lives would become intertwined with significant events in both their native country and the United States. Hikozo, especially, would make connections in San Francisco that would enable him to meet leading American intellectuals and politicians (including at least two presidents), become the first naturalized Japanese-American citizen, convert to Roman Catholicism, and establish business contacts that would endure throughout his life. He would later write two sometimes-contradictory accounts of his adventures. The first, written in Japanese and published in 1863, was undertaken in part, he said, because he was tired of continually being asked to relate his experiences. The second memoir of his adventures, which is far longer, appeared in English in 1893. Although Heco's writings are full of exaggerations, omissions, inaccuracies, and inconsistencies, they provide a very strong basis for telling his remarkable story.


Hikozo (Joseph Heco)

A DEATH SENTENCE

At the time of Hikozo's shipwreck in the mid-nineteenth century, Japan had been closed to outsiders for more than two centuries. An imperial decree of 1638 stipulated that any Japanese who left the country could not return upon pain of death. Such was also the penalty for learning a foreign language, following foreign customs, or converting to Christianity.[1] Watchtowers and cannons guarded the shoreline, preventing news and information about the outside world from penetrating Japanese society. The ruling Tokugawa shogunate imposed Japan's isolation in the seventeenth century as protection against outside influences that it feared would disrupt the delicate political balance established among the feudal warlords. The isolation was not total, however; there were occasional breaches in the wall of silence. Even supporters of the exclusion policy granted limited exceptions to the Dutch and the Chinese. The former were allowed to send one trading ship each year to Nagasaki, where they were confined to a man-made island (Deshima) in the harbor. Similarly, the Chinese were allowed annual trading privileges to the


漂舟尓鰐鮫向ヒ来る圖

The young Japanese sailor Hikozo, with the rest of the crew of the junk Eiriki-maru, *was blown out to sea by a storm in 1850. State-imposed isolation meant that any citizen who left Japan could not return upon pain of death. Adrift for fifty days and threatened by sharks, the junk's sixteen crew members were rescued by the American merchant ship* Auckland. *Hikozo was renamed Heco by the crew.* (LEFT) *Hutchings Illustrated California Magazine 1856-1860.* (ABOVE) *Hikozo (Joseph Heco),* Hyoryu Ki: Floating on the Pacific Ocean.

NORTH BAKER RESEARCH LIBRARY, CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY same port. Through the Dutch and the Chinese, Japanese officials managed to acquire a certain understanding of western technology, geography, and politics.

Still, isolation dominated, and to promote it in 1639, the Japanese government ordered that all junks be built with open sterns and large square rudders, ensuring their suitability only for coastal trading. If swept out to sea by storm, an event that happened all too often in the treacherous seas off Japan, the sails and rudders might be ripped away, causing the junks to drift helplessly. Over the years, there must have been many hundreds of vessels lost and unrecorded by this terrifying fate. This misfortune was so common that the Japanese language had a word to describe its victims: *hyoryu*, meaning a person adrift on the sea. Once caught in the warm Japanese current, these sturdy junks could drift for months until they finally washed ashore, were rescued by passing ships, or simply disappeared. The currents carried them as far as Alaska, the West Coast of North America, and to the Hawaiian Islands.[2]

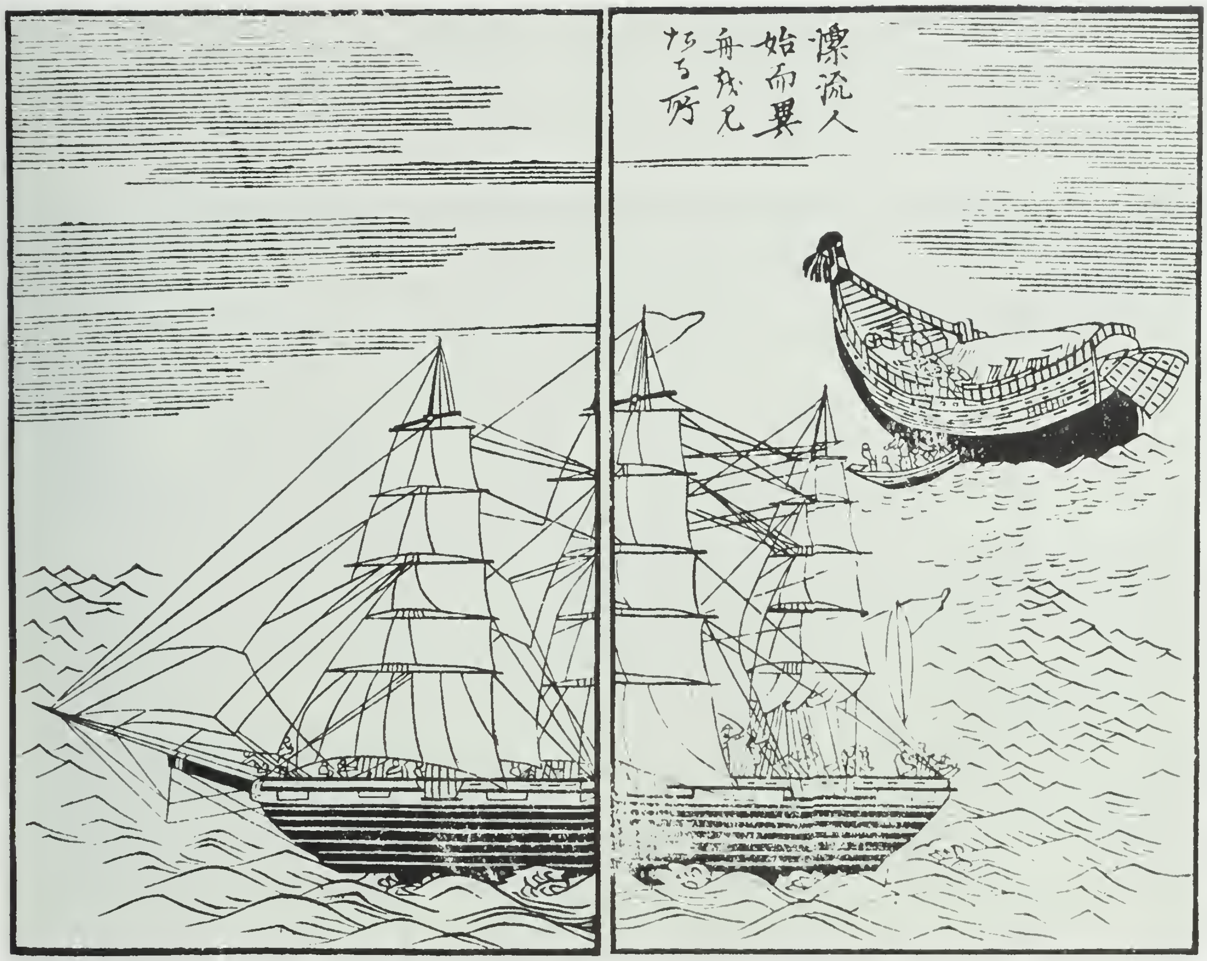
Depending on what the junks carried in their cargoes, these drifters could survive for months on rice, by fishing, by capturing rainwater, and by distilling seawater. One junk drifted for over a year until finally coming ashore in early 1834 on the Olympic Peninsula in the present state of Washington. The three surviving members of the fourteen-man crew were captured and enslaved by Indians before being rescued by employees of the British Hudson's Bay Company. Eventually taken to Macao, the three were handed over to missionaries who tried in vain to return them to Japan.[3] The path of one of these survivors was to cross that of Joseph Heco many years later.

Wherever they landed, despite the possible penalties, the Japanese almost always wanted to return home. Their rescuers were generally sympathetic, but knew that they could not simply sail into Japanese ports. One solution was to hand over castaways to Russians, who would take them to Urup, the closest Russian territory to Japan. From there, the survivors might be able to make their way in a small boat to neighboring Japanese islands. Occasionally, Dutch seamen helped, since they were allowed annual trade visits to Japan and could presumably return castaways.[4] Another increasingly common approach by the mid-nineteenth century was to turn castaways over to the Chinese, who housed them in a special dormitory near Shanghai. When the annual Chinese trading expedition went to Nagasaki, the castaways went along to be handed over to Japanese authorities. Although it was commonly assumed that anyone who left Japan and returned would be put to death, in fact, there were many castaways who did make it back. Many months of interrogation might follow, but if the sailors convinced the government that they had left involuntarily and had not become Christianized, they were allowed to return to their homes.[5]

SURVIVAL

After the storm had torn sails from the mast, the crew of the helplessly drifting *Eiriki-maru* jettisoned much of its cargo of barley and peas to lighten the ship. They tried to pump out the water that poured in and cut off the useless mast to make the junk less top heavy and more maneuverable. The men prayed, drifted, fished, and made oil from walnuts they found in the cargo hold. They even distilled water by covering a rice pot, boiling the seawater, and collecting the condensed steam. This tedious process, which produced only a little more than a liter of fresh water after three hours, was abandoned because it required so much fuel.[6]

Yet they managed to survive for fifty days. Finally, about five hundred miles off the coast of Japan they were sighted and rescued by the American merchant ship *Auckland*, commanded by a Captain Jennings, carrying a shipment of sugar from Hong Kong to San Francisco. Somewhat apprehensive, but knowing that their own vessel would not last much longer, the castaways


漂流人始而異舟を見たる所

Heco published two accounts of his story, one in Japanese in 1863 and another in English in 1893. An illustration for the Japanese edition shows the Auckland *rescuing the foundering junk. Following the opening of Japan to the rest of the world, its citizens were avid to learn more about western technology. Heco's book here shows the* Auckland *and its rigging in loving detail. Hikozo (Joseph Heco),* Hyoryu Ki: Floating on the Pacific Ocean

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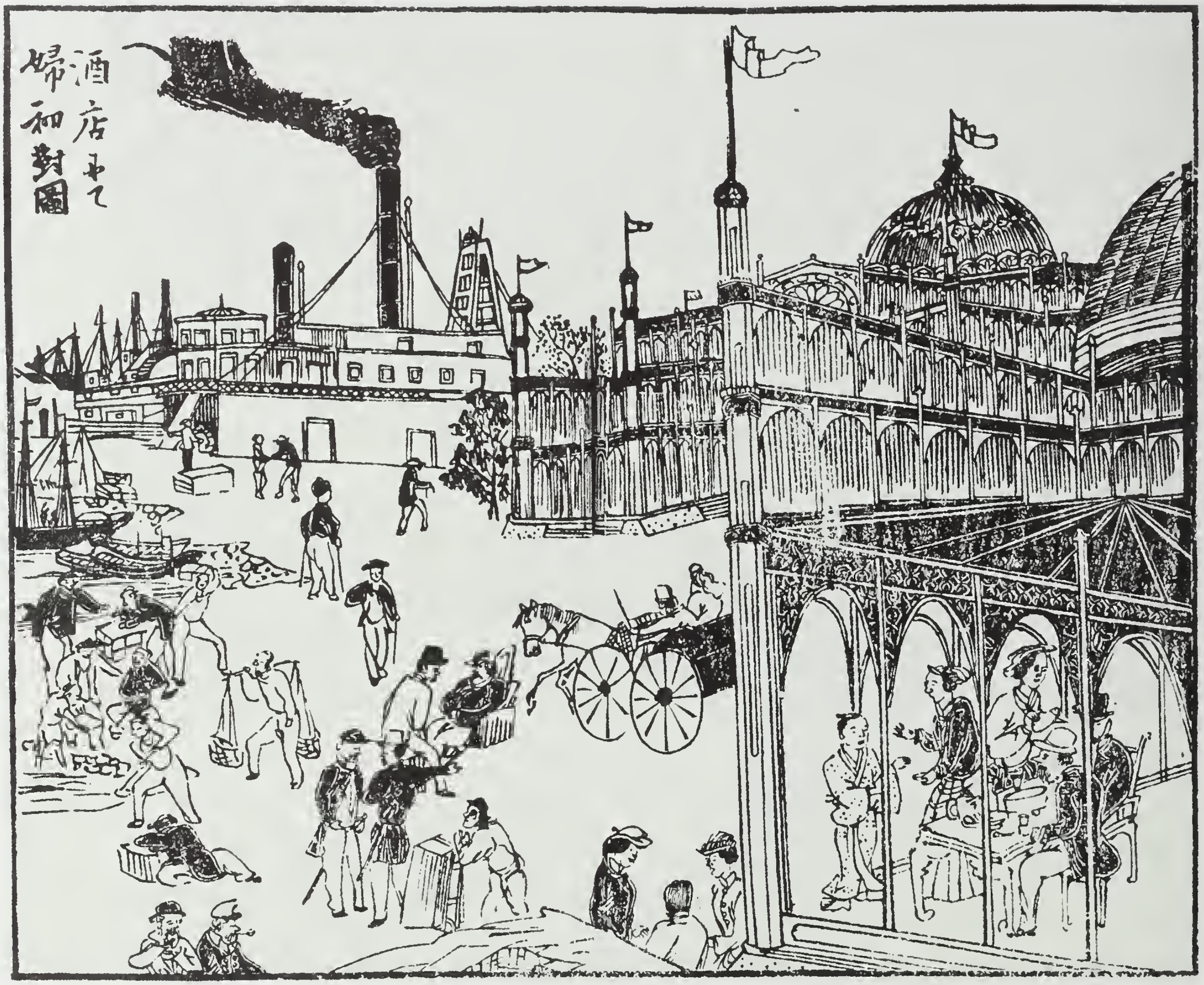
boarded the strange ship.[7] They took little with them except the clothes on their backs, some rice, and their navigational equipment. Language was an obvious problem, but the exhausted Japanese saw that the "very rough and odd" strangers were actually "kind and attentive."[8] With the help of the ship's Chinese cook, whose written characters, but not language, the Japanese could understand, they learned something about a "Gold Mountain," but had no idea that this referred to California.

The technological superiority of the American ship impressed the Japanese. The junk had a crew of seventeen sailors, the much larger American ship only eleven. The junk often required at least two and as many as five men to work the tiller; the American ship operated with only one man at the wheel. The multiple masts and sails on the American ship were obviously superior to the junk's single mast. The Japanese compass had only twelve points; the American version had thirty-two.[9]



Heco spent nine years in the United States before he was able to return to Japan, much of that time in San Francisco. He traveled to the East Coast, visiting New York, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. An illustration for Heco's Japanese narrative included a busy port with a steamship in the background. Hikozo (Joseph Heco), Hyoryu Ki: Floating on the Pacific Ocean.

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The Japanese did not like the American food, especially meat and dairy products (forbidden to Buddhists), but as the days passed they grew used to it. Realizing the differences in customary diet, the Americans gave the Japanese raw fish and vegetables, to which the castaways added a little rice that they had brought from their junk. They exchanged their tattered garments for western clothes and haircuts. Despite the kindness, however, there remained a lingering suspicion among the culturally restricted Japanese that the Americans would eat them if their own food ran out. Fortunately this theory was never tested; the ship arrived at San Francisco on March 4, 1851, forty-two days after the rescue. The Japanese had been at sea for three months.[10]

News of the exotic new arrivals spread quickly throughout the city.[11] Many San Franciscans simply wanted to see the visitors. Others suggested that returning the castaways could help achieve the desirable opening of diplomatic and trade relations with Japan. The *Alta California* proposed that the Japanese "be well treated, and sent back in one of our ships-of-war."[12] This newspaper was especially fervent in its desire to "open" Japan, by force if necessary, and frequently expressed that opinion over the next several months. Secretary of State Daniel Webster reckoned the diplomatic possibilities: When informed of the situation, he surmised that the castaways' arrival on U.S. soil might "afford a favorable opportunity for opening commercial relations with Japan." He suggested to Secretary of the Navy William A. Graham that a "small national vessel" on the West Coast "take these unfortunate men . . . to Hong Kong." From there, Captain John Henry Aulick (predecessor to Commodore Matthew Perry in the proposed venture to "open" Japan) could take them home. "Accompanied by an imposing Naval force . . . and with kindly disposition," the expedition, by "returning these unfortunates to their homes," might accomplish the "more important objects" of the mission.[13] The expedition that would ultimately lead to Commodore Perry's "opening" of Japan (1853–54) was then in the planning stages, and the fate of the Japanese castaways was inevitably tied to that diplomatic effort.

THE FIRST OF THEIR NATION

Most San Franciscans believed that the castaways were "the first of their nation" to set foot in North America.[14] Of course this was not true, since we now know of many previous incidents,[15] although people at the time had little likelihood of knowing. They were not even the "first of their nation" to visit San Francisco. That distinction belongs to Manjiro, who like Hikozo, had been cast away at age fourteen. Ten years before Hikozo's adventures began, Manjiro and his shipmates were stranded on an uninhabited island for six months before they were rescued by an American whaler. The captain, William H. Whitfield, was impressed by Manjiro and invited the boy to return with him to New England for schooling. The boy agreed and sailed with Whitfield, leaving his four colleagues in Hawaii as guests of that kingdom's government. Whitfield bestowed on Manjiro the Americanized name of John Mungero, often shortened to John Mung. The whaling ship took two years to complete its voyage, but once in New England, Manjiro enrolled in school, and by 1845, had apprenticed to a cooper. Despite the kindness he received, he dreamed of returning to Japan. Hearing about the discovery of gold in California, with Whitfield's encouragement, he decided to try his luck in the mines to make enough money to return home.

Working his way on a San Francisco-bound lumber ship, he arrived in February 1850, spent several days in the city, and then took a riverboat to Sacramento. Within four months he had accumulated the six hundred dollars he thought necessary, returned to San Francisco, and caught a ship for Honolulu. Apparently, his time in San Francisco went unnoticed. Anyone who met him probably regarded him as Chinese. His ability to speak English and his somewhat Chinese-sounding name (John Mung), not to mention the thorough implausibility of finding a Japanese in California, would have worked against people guessing his nationality. Whether he failed to disclose his Japanese heritage for some reason is unknown. He arrived in Honolulu just in time to act as interpreter for yet another group of castaways, and then Manjiro and two of his former colleagues returned home on a small boat lowered into the water off the Japanese coast from an American ship headed for China. Once home, they were imprisoned and interrogated for several months, but released in 1853.[16]

The seventeen castaways who went ashore in San Francisco in 1851 were not the first, but they were certainly the largest known group of Japanese anywhere in America to that time. Their lengthy stay provided an opportunity for them and for San Franciscans to learn about each other. One man from New Haven, Connecticut, bragging to relatives back home about the diversity of nationalities in the young city, told his relatives that "we now have some Japanese . . . the first that were ever seen abroad." He had not yet seen these "curiosities," but like many others hoped that they would be returned quickly to further the cause of opening Japan to Americans.[17]

The boy Hikozo was now generally called Heco, probably intended as a shortened nickname coined by sailors on the *Auckland.* A few days after arriving, he and his shipmates went ashore to tour the city. The boy from a provincial Japanese town, who had had only one brief visit to Edo, later related his first impressions:

> The streets were broad and paved with stones and tiles, with sidewalks for foot passengers . . . . The houses were much larger than in our own country, some of them two or three storeys high, built of brick and stone, and though some of them were of wood, still even they were large and spacious. There were numerous shops of all kinds, with goods displayed in large glass windows, hotels, restaurants, drinking places, horses, carts and carriages . . . . And in fact it appeared to me much like the City of Yedo [Edo or Tokyo] with the exception of the carts which were drawn by horses instead of by men or cows and bullocks as they are in our country.[18]

Heco also saw his first chain gang "digging and carting the earth from the hill close by" and his first black man, whose appearance frightened him. Much of this account, written forty years later, is obviously mistaken, exaggerated, or a result of fading memories. No one in San Francisco in March 1851 would have described the city's streets as "broad and paved with stones and tiles." Though there were a few projects to "plank" major roads in 1851, they were certainly not paved during the year the castaways were there. Where Heco saw "stones and tiles," others saw only mud, and the *Alta California* referred scornfully to a major street as Lake Montgomery. Perhaps Heco was remembering the San Francisco of ten years later, when he returned for a visit from Japan.[19]

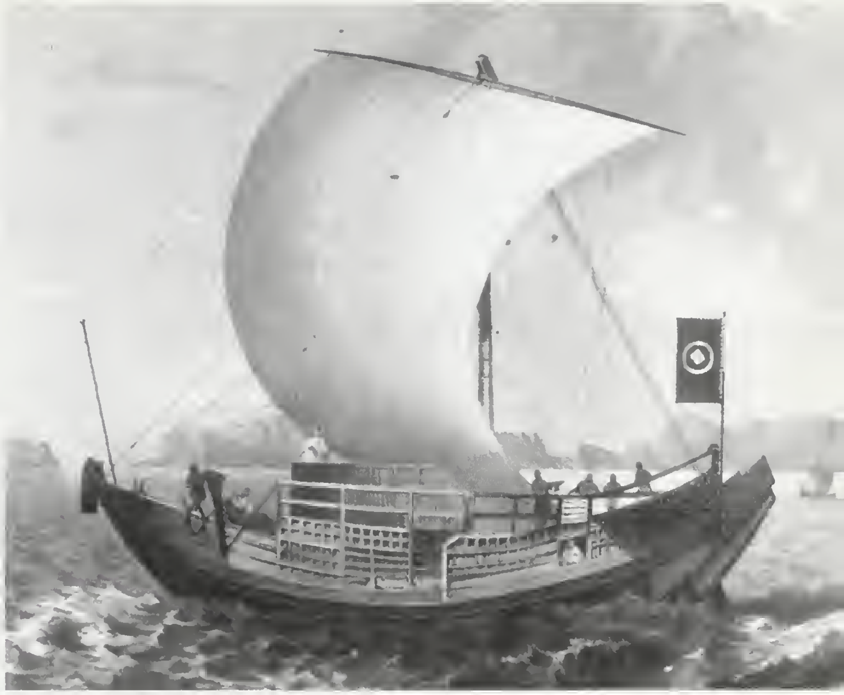
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

For the next few days, the Japanese helped the crew of the *Auckland* unload its cargo onto a hulk anchored next to the ship. The hulk's captain decided to show off the Japanese to the citizens of San Francisco. He managed to convey to them that he wanted them to change out of their newly acquired western clothes and put on their "exotic" native clothes and go into town with him one evening to "see the grand dances." One wonders at the condition of their discarded clothes after being at sea for three months, but they obliged him. The newspapers reported that the "shipwrecked Japanese" would "be present at the Grand Fancy Dress and Masquerade Ball, at the California Exchange, on Wednesday Evening, March 19." At this popular entertainment venue, they "would perform some of their most favorite dances in true Japanese style." Everyone was urged to attend, since the castaways' stay was surely limited, and this might be the only opportunity to see them. What a treat it would be to see the Japanese dance "with the ladies of a civilized country."[20] The impression was that the Japanese had volunteered to put on a show.

Heco remembered the event very differently. On the appointed evening, the captain of the hulk took them all to the ballroom on Kearney Street. He then took them upstairs "into a room of about twenty-four feet by eighteen, with velvet cushioned chairs, soft and handsome window curtains, and with a large mirror on the side of the wall." They had never seen such a large mirror, and at first they thought that their reflection was actually another group of Japanese. In the next room, dancers were getting dressed and putting on makeup and masks. "We saw some females put on men's clothes," Heco remembered, "while some men arrayed themselves in women's garments."

Still unclear as to what was happening, at about eight-thirty they heard a "fearful and hideous" commotion. This was the band, unfamiliar to them, which made a terrible noise and gave some of them headaches. When the captain led them to a stage with the curtain lowered, the Japanese began to understand what was happening. Some of them grew angry when they realized that they were being put on display to make money for the captain. Mango, their own junk's captain, calmed his men, pointing out that this was a small price to pay to people who had saved their lives. When the curtain rose, "there was a large audience in front of us."[21]

The Japanese sat there for several minutes, and then the captain of the hulk indicated through gestures that they should get up and mingle with the "splendidly dressed" crowd of men, women, and children. Either out of curiosity or pity (Heco could not decide) "people came up close, took our hands, and gave us tobacco, rings, candy, and silver coins, each according to his own fancy." Heco, probably because of his young age, "received an especially large amount, there being fifteen or sixteen pieces of silver coin alone." In return he gave some of them Japanese coins that he had.



A Japanese junk pictured in the official narrative for Commodore Matthew Perry's 1853 1854 expedition. From Perry's Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan performed in the years 1852, 1853 and 1854.

BANCROFT LIBRARY

There were gaming tables throughout the room, and at nine o'clock the dancing began. One unidentified young man about twenty-five years old escorted Heco around the hall and showed him how to gamble. Then at eleven p.m., after eating supper in a room downstairs, they returned to the ship.

The following day, one newspaper called it "a brilliant and jovial affair," at which the Japanese "created a great deal of amusement, by their looks of wonder and unique appearance." That appearance, according to yet another newspaper, included "complexions . . . of the greyish order," and facial features much like those "of their Asiatic neighbors the Celestials [Chinese]." They were "intelligent" and "good natured" and one of them—perhaps Heco—"engaged in 'chipping' at one of the faro banks, and seemingly appreciating the game." The bartenders had been instructed not to serve alcohol to the Japanese, who received only mineral water and cigars.[23]

Heco's next lesson in American life was less agreeable. The *Auckland's* first mate offered to help Heco buy new clothes with the money received the night before. Instead, the mate took Heco to a bar to meet friends. They drank, smoked, and danced with women (whom Heco guessed were prostitutes), using Heco's money. "The man had misled me . . . at which I was greatly vexed." Later, Heco and a couple of companions asked the mate to return the money. Instead, the mate gave Heco an oversized coat from China: "This old coat was all I got in return for my $15.50," Heco complained. Not surprisingly, and with good reason, he and his friends no longer trusted the mate.[24]

Though Heco does not mention it, apparently there was another unfortunate incident around the same time. On March 17, one of the newspapers mentioned "a fine chart of the coast of Japan" among the items salvaged from the junk. The following week, another paper reported that someone had gone on board the *Auckland* and "probably by mistake" had taken the chart. Whoever took it was urged to return it immediately.[25]

Aside from these two incidents, however, the Japanese apparently enjoyed themselves and were treated with respect. One day they visited the offices of the *California Daily Courier*, with the captain of yet another ship, P. R. Macy of the *Panama.* They inspected the type, the presses, and other equipment. There is no indication of what prompted this visit, but since newspapers were unknown in Japan, the castaways may have expressed curiosity about the vehicle through which they received so much attention. Several years later Heco would establish one of the first newspapers in Japan; perhaps this visit to the *Courier's* office planted the idea.[26]

A few days later, onshore at the Long Wharf, the Japanese visitors had "a jovial sort of time." They were trying to exchange their Japanese coins, "a bushel of which is worth exactly a dollar and a quarter." They must have had several bushels, because the *Alta California* reported that they exchanged for "Spanish quarters, Yankee dimes and half dollars" and "in the course of the day . . . acquired a considerable quantity." They then spent the money on "coffee and cakes, molasses candy, peanuts, and some elegant specimens of brass jewelry." The latter, the writer predicted frivolously, would probably be used to "initiate themselves into the good graces of the lovely damsels of Japan."[27]

The next day the *Alta California* carried a story specifically featuring Heco, referring to him as "Sako." The boy was "as bright, and intelligent a little fellow as [could be] found in any nation." His "clear black eyes appear to drink in all he sees in this to him strange world." Furthermore, he was "exceedingly polite," bowing low when spoken to. He had already attracted the attention of people who were willing to "retain" the boy if he wished to remain in San Francisco, but the paper suggested that this would not be a good idea. The "poor unsophisticated little fellow," even if he were "rid of his barbarous and heathenish ideas," would probably end up a monte dealer. It was far better for him to return to Japan before he "learned more than the good features of the Americans" although Heco had already accomplished as much. Nevertheless, the paper predicted that he would probably have "a useful life before him in his own land," and would be "the best ambassador to send from here amongst the Japanese."[28]

The masquerade ball at the California Exchange had been so successful that the Japanese were invited back for another appearance. Heco does not mention this second event, but newspaper accounts claimed that the Japanese were "delighted with all they saw." Meanwhile, The *California Daily Courier* denounced a rumor that the *Auckland's* Captain Jennings had profited by exhibiting the Japanese. The "worthy Captain has never received one cent, directly or indirectly," the paper claimed indignantly. Quite the contrary, the captain had hosted the Japanese for over seventy days, taking "every possible care of them," and all he had received in return was their help in unloading the ship's cargo.

Henry Cole, proprietor of the California Exchange, seemingly was the only person to profit, since two appearances of the Japanese attracted large crowds to his establishment. The *Courier* suggested that Cole do something in return for the Japanese, "destitute of money and clothing." The result was a benefit ball, scheduled for March 29. Other newspapers joined in the appeal to "turn out in full force to assist these poor and unfortunate persons." At this event, the papers predicted, the public would probably have their last chance to see "these curious specimens of humanity," since they would probably soon sail for home.[29] As with previous stories, these accounts reflect a mixture of sympathy, ignorance of Japanese culture, and patronizing racism. They also include the continuing assumption that the castaways would be sent back to Japan very quickly. Curiously, Heco did not mention the benefit in his writings, nor did any of the newspapers report what happened or how much money, if any, was raised.

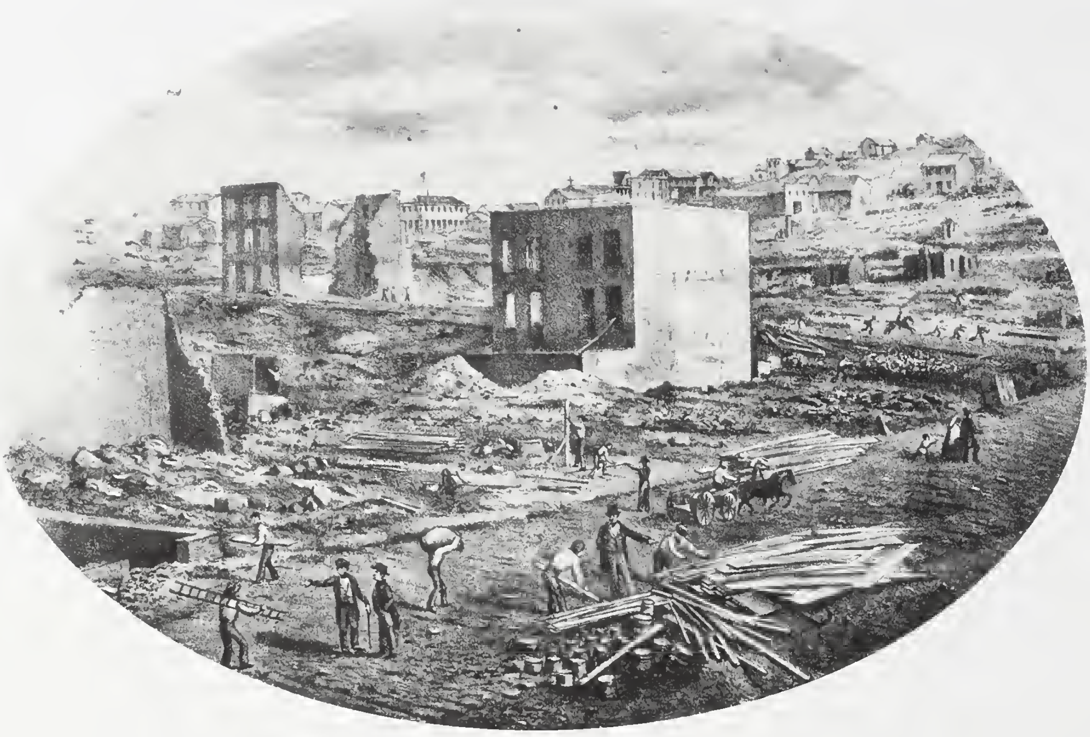
Indeed, the newspapers seldom mentioned the Japanese again, except in the context of using them as a wedge to open commerce with Japan. The *Alta California* suggested that the "moderate demands" of Americans might need to be "backed by a small force . . . [to] exert a Christian and civilizing influence." Another paper ominously suggested that the Japanese government should learn from "the lesson their Chinese neighbors . . . received from the English" in the recent Opium War,[30] when the British forced trade with China and seized Hong Kong in the process.

SETTLING IN

In late March, the *Auckland* was ready to return to sea. Collector of the Port T. Butler King, who had written to Washington for instructions, assumed responsibility for the Japanese, anticipating that he would be directed to transfer them to a revenue cutter on which they would be domiciled, and in time, assigned for duty. On March 22, the revenue cutter *Polk* received sixteen mattresses (one short of the number of Japanese passengers, for reasons unknown). Three days later, the Japanese themselves, along with seventeen blankets and seventeen tin pots went aboard.[31] The *Alta California* printed one last story reporting on the transfer of the men from the *Auckland* to the *Polk*, making another plea for the return of the chart stolen off the *Auckland*, and mentioning another shore visit, where the Japanese "amused themselves by circulating around the Plaza."[32] Then, as far as the newspapers were concerned, the castaways were no longer news. Most of what we know about the castaways' remaining months in San Francisco comes either from Heco's accounts or from sketchy reports in the *Polk's* logbook.

The *Polk* was a large iron-clad ship of about six hundred tons, commanded by Captain Henry D. Hunter of New York, with a crew of about forty men. The Japanese were quartered "on the berth deck between the ward room and the men's quarters." The "very kind" crew gave them dark blue pants and jackets. In September, after six months on board, Customs Collector King provided each Japanese with one additional blue cloth jacket, one pair of pants, two pairs of "draws," two undershirts, and two pairs of socks. The jackets' brass buttons made the Japanese feel like important officials whenever they went ashore.[33]

Language continued to be a problem. Communication consisted mainly of gestures and pointing. Fortunately for the Japanese, the *Polk's* master at arms, Thomas Troy, wanted to learn Japanese and offered to teach English in return. "A fierce-looking, burly man with a great amount of whiskers," the Irish American, belying his fearsome appearance, "was reliable and honest, and . . . kind-hearted." The Japanese agreed to help Troy with their language, but most of them were reluctant to learn English for fear of potential punishment when they returned home. The youthful and less cautious Heco, despite attempts to dissuade him, was an exception, and he learned a little English over the next several months.[34]



During Heco's stay in San Francisco, a terrible conflagration swept the city in the spring of 1851. Oddly, Heco does not mention this event in his memoirs, although he must have observed it. On the whole treated kindly by their American hosts, Heco and his shipmates were isolated by language and cultural differences and were often unaware of local politics and events.

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FINE ARTS COLLECTION, CALIFORNIA [illegible] COLLECTION

Since the *Polk* was a military ship, "each person had a schedule of duties day and night."[35] Everyone had duties, that is, except for the Japanese. Both because they were bored and because they wanted to do something to repay the kindness they were receiving, they suggested that the youngest of the group "should go and help and wait on the officers." The Americans accepted the offer. Heco worked directly for the captain; three other young castaways, Tora, Kame, and Shin, helped the wardroom officers; and the rest of the group helped clean the decks and other chores. For their work, they were compensated with clothes, shoes, or money, and after about a month, the Japanese replaced the stewards, who left the ship, taking over all their duties for most of the remainder of their stay.[36] Meanwhile, the *Polk* continued to perform normal customs service operations, each day boarding several inbound ships to inspect the cargoes.[37]

Apparently, the only diversions available to the Japanese men were Sunday walks around the city. According to Heco, Captain Hunter always ordered someone to accompany them, probably for their own protection along San Francisco's rough Barbary Coast. Besides Sunday outings, there was one evening an excursion to "Shelton's Agricultural and Mineral Exhibition," which displayed California's bounty.[38] One of the Sunday walks was memorable even forty years later when Heco wrote about it. Walking through the hills, they came across "an isolated building with a great fence around it." Curious to see what was inside, they found a few Mexicans "murdering cattle in the most cruel and merciless fashion." Horrified, the Japanese hurried back to the ship.[39]

As interesting as the incidents Heco included in his memoirs are the things he left out. There is no mention, for example, of the great fire of May 4, 1851, two months after they arrived, that destroyed most of the business area of the city with flames observed as far away as Monterey, one hundred miles to the south.[40] It is inconceivable that Heco and his comrades were unaware of this and a subsequent fire a couple of weeks later, or the resulting disruption to the city, yet these catastrophes do not appear in either of his memoirs. Also absent is any mention of the first Vigilance Committee, which was spawned by the city's lawlessness, not the least of which was the arson that had caused such destruction and waste. Probably the Japanese were unaware of San Francisco politics, especially given the language barrier, but it seems unlikely that they would not have heard about the four hangings in Portsmouth Square.[41]

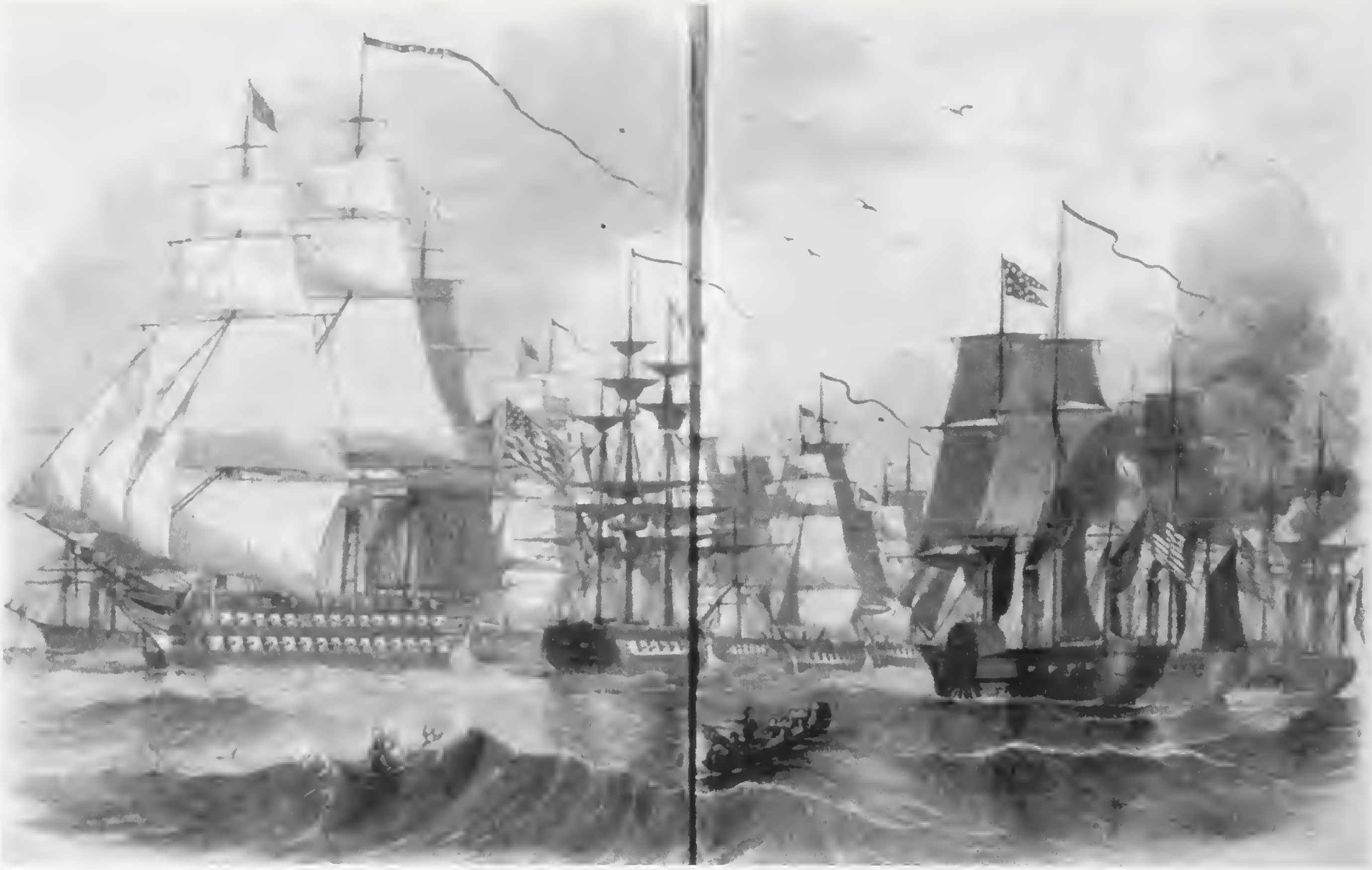
By September, possibly because of the damp weather on the bay, or because of the unaccustomed diet, the Japanese were frequently sick. The nature of the illness is unknown, but at least two of them were sick enough to be taken off the ship and sent to a hospital. So concerned was the new captain of the *Polk*, John A. Webster, that Customs Collector King assigned a physician to the ship. Throughout October, three unnamed Japanese were listed in the log as sick each day; by November, there were still two listed each day.[42]

HOMEWARD BOUND

The U.S. sloop of war *St. Mary's*, under the command of G. A. Magruder, sailed through the Golden Gate on February 17, 1852, and anchored at "Saucelito."[43] The ship, with twenty-two guns and a crew of 220, was to take the Japanese to Hong Kong, where they would join the expedition being assembled by Commodore Matthew Perry and return home. On the 28th, Webster sent the Japanese to the *St. Mary's*, with a letter to Magruder warning that the junk's Captain Mango was "extremely ill, and unless the best of care is taken of him, he will not make his port of destination." He described the Japanese as "very respectful and obedient and desiring of doing all they can."[44]

The impending departure created a mixture of joy and sadness. Tears welled in the eyes of the *Polk's* captain. Heco felt as if he were saying goodbye to a parent. Leaving Thomas Troy was especially difficult, both because of his kindness and because he was the only one who could speak any Japanese. Despite the "comfortable quarters" awaiting them on the *St. Mary's*, they bemoaned being among strangers, none of whom understood Japanese. On a final visit to the *Polk* before they sailed, they asked Troy to join their Pacific crossing. He was willing if the *St. Mary's* captain could pay him "ordinary seaman's wages" of twelve dollars per month. Captain Magruder agreed. Troy gave up his post on the *Polk* (which paid fifty to sixty dollars per month) and off they went. The ship sailed for the Hawaiian Islands on March 13. Three weeks later they reached Hilo, where old Captain Mango died at age 63. After burying him there, they sailed for Hong Kong, arriving about May 20, and then to Macao, where they expected to find the American squadron.[45] Only the paddle steamer *Susquehanna*, flagship of the U.S. eastern squadron and commanded by Captain John Henry Aulick, had arrived. Heco and his colleagues boarded the *Susquehanna*, which sailed to Hong Kong.

Their treatment and their circumstances took a turn for the worse. The weather in Hong Kong was very hot, and the castaways "suffered terribly." Their quarters "were extremely cramped and unpleasant," and the crewmen of the *Susquehanna* "were rough and unkind." Thomas Troy told them that the men of this ship were used to dealing with Chinese, whom they considered "a greedy and a cringing race," and that they regarded the Japanese in the same manner and



Heco's first attempt to return to Japan was to take passage aboard the U.S. sloop of war St. Mary's, *which was traveling to Hong Kong in 1853 to join Commodore Matthew Perry's expedition to force the Japanese to open its doors to the West. The sloop is the smaller vessel just to the left of center. While waiting for Perry's squadron to assemble, Heco's comrades grew impatient to cash in on California' continued gold fever and he was convinced to return with them. From Perry's* Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, performed in the years 1852, 1853, and 1854.

Bancroft Library.

treated them in the same fashion. Upset at these conditions, the Japanese looked for ways to leave the ship. When they were allowed to go ashore one Sunday, about half of them set off for Nanking, as a first step to getting back to Japan. But they were ambushed by robbers and forced to return to the *Susquehanna* in a "piteous plight." There seemed little choice but to continue to submit to the treatment they were receiving on the ship. Meanwhile, Troy became impatient waiting for Perry, and wanted to return to California "before the gold fever was over." He asked Heco to go back with him, offering to pay all expenses and arguing that Heco could improve his English, and after Japan was opened, could return without fear. It would be in Heco's and the Japanese government's interests to have an English-speaking Japanese. Reluctant at first to leave all his countrymen, Heco finally agreed when Troy offered to take two of Heco's friends as well.[46]

CALIFORNIA OPPORTUNITIES

Heco, Troy, and the two friends, Tora and Kame, moved to a "cheap boarding-house" in Hong Kong until they found passage to San Francisco on the *Sarah Hooper*, an old British ship of about four hundred tons. Thomas paid the fifty-dollar fare for each of them; there were no first- or second-class cabins, so they traveled "in the steerage," arriving in San Francisco in December 1852.[47] Troy found old friends from the *Polk*, now assigned to another revenue cutter, the *Frolic*. These friends agreed to keep Heco on board that ship while Troy searched for jobs for Tora and Kame. Heco remained and worked on the *Frolic* until April 1853, though he easily got seasick on the small ship. He "suffered much" on a trip to San Diego and back. There was also a disagreement with Captain Douglas Ottinger over Heco's wages, which upset Troy's friends who were watching out for him. They advised Troy to take Heco ashore, offering to help support him until he found work.

Tora and Kame, meanwhile, found good jobs on two ships at Benicia, across the bay. They earned seventy dollars and sixty dollars, respectively, more than Troy made as master at arms. Kame, who worked on the cutter *Ewing*, was certainly the unnamed Japanese who "jumped overboard" from that ship on the night of June 28, 1853. Heco did not mention this incident, and it is unclear whether it was accidental or intentional. Kame's "shriek after rising to the surface" went unheard by others on the ship, but fortunately he was seen and rescued by two men from another ship.[48]

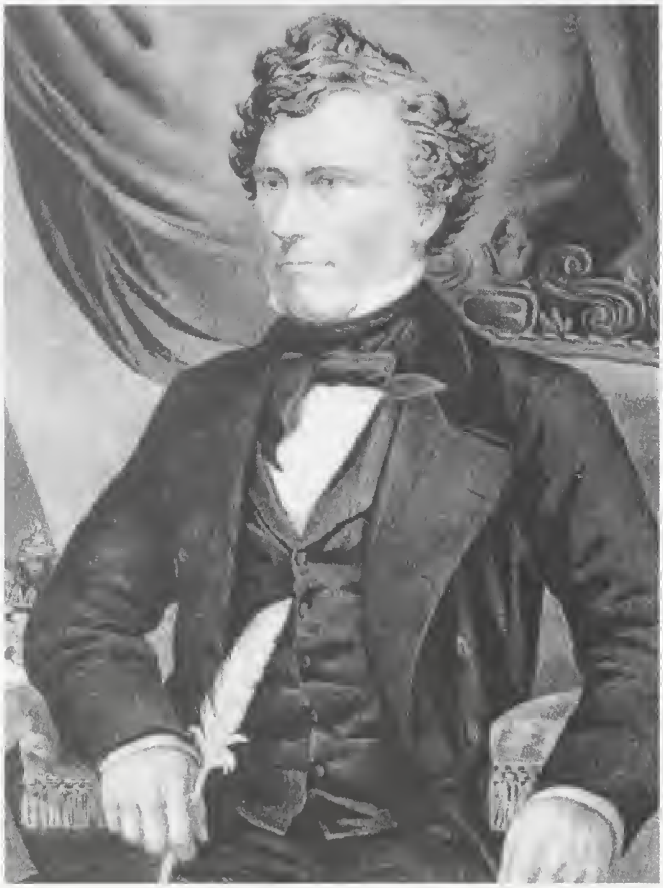
Captain Pease of the revenue cutter *Argus* (where Tora worked) happily took both Troy and Heco on board until Heco could find another job. Troy resumed his old position as master at arms, and Heco, with Captain Pease's help, found a job in a boarding house in Benicia that paid him twenty-five dollars per month. The work was hard for a fifteen-year-old boy, though the proprietor and his son helped him as much as they could. The Chinese cook, on the other hand, gave Heco all "his dirty work." Captain Pease and Troy found yet another job for Heco "in a nice genteel boarding-house kept by a lady and her two daughters." The five or six boarders were "all gentlemen of the first class," and even better, the new job paid five dollars more per month than the old one had.

One day Captain Pease returned from business in San Francisco with a stranger, dressed in Japanese clothes, "with a sword stuck in his girdle." When they saw him, both Heco and Tora feared that he was an officer of the Japanese government who had come to take them home "to pay the penalty of our wrong-doing." Fortunately, the stranger was another shipwrecked Japanese, brought to San Francisco by a fruit schooner from the South Sea Islands. When Heco and Tora spoke to him in Japanese, "he opened his eyes widely . . . he fell on his knees, and . . . prayed to us to help him." Supercargo on a ship with a crew of twelve , the stranger was the only survivor when his junk was swept out to sea and drifted for four months with a broken rudder.

Captain Pease persuaded Heco, Troy, and Juitaro (the stranger) to return with him to San Francisco. The four of them went to see the customs collector, Beverly C. Sanders. A Baltimore businessman, Sanders had arrived in San Francisco in 1851, seeking his fortune. He had established several ventures in the city, including a banking business with former and future mayor, Charles Brenham. This and other political connections had enabled him to secure the plum appointment as customs collector.[49] Sanders agreed to help by keeping Juitaro on the *Argus*, and Heco, who served as interpreter, so impressed him during their initial meeting that he invited the boy to live with him, promising to send him to school. Pease advised Heco to accept the "fine offer," and although the owner of the boarding house tempted Heco with a raise, he wanted an education. His boss reluctantly abandoned attempts to retain him in her employ and on June 15, 1853, Heco went to work for Sanders.[50]

"A GENTLEMAN IN A TWINKLING"

Though his duties were purely clerical, Heco felt pride in having been "made a gentleman all in a twinkling." Sanders' political connections proved advantageous from the start. On the afternoon of his first day of work, for example, Sanders introduced Heco to California's Senator William H. Gwin. Later the same day, Heco was astounded by a visit to Sanders' home at the corner of Mission and Kearney (now Third Street), the finest house he had ever seen, the home of "such a wealthy man."



Serving as a clerk for customs collector Beverly C. Sanders, Heco traveled to Washington, where he met President Franklin Pierce. Heco was unimpressed with Pierce's modesty and the lack of pomp and grandeur in the White House.

Library of Congress

When Sanders traveled to his home in Baltimor where his wife and most of his family remaine he took Heco with him. They arrived in New York on August 5, 1853, where Heco was astonished by his introduction to the telegraph and other technological wonders, such as his first train ride: "a carriage drawn by a steam-engine which could go at the rate of 25. 40, or even 60 miles an hour." In Baltimore, Heco was "introduced as a stranger in a strange land, and as pe haps the first Japanese that had ever been in Baltimore." A few days later, Heco accompanie Sanders to Washington to call on the "Chief Ma of the Nation," President Franklin Pierce. The first Japanese person to meet an American pres dent was not terribly impressed because althoug the White House was nice enough, the preside himself was dressed in common clothes, there were no guards, and the rooms, though "furnished with silk curtains and cushions on the chairs," were not grand enough for the "Chief o the Nation." In Japan, "even the smallest distric official has more pomp and splendor about his person than this man has!" When the president entered the room in which Sanders and Heco waited, he shook hands with each of them and the president himself brought Heco a chair. Pierc suggested that Heco feel free to roam around th house "and amuse [himself] without ceremony," while the two men talked about business. Heco obliged and "found everything astonishing."

In January 1854, Sanders traveled to Russia to discuss contract terms to ship ice to San Francisco from Alaska. While Sanders was abroad, Heco remained in Baltimore at school, studying reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. Before returning to California, Mrs. Sanders, "who was very ardent in the matter of religion," suggested that Heco be baptized. At the cathedral, Heco met "Father—I forget his name—who . . . questioned me on various matters and points." The priest told Heco he would need a Christian name, suggesting several, and Heco settled on "Joseph."

Baptized and with the rudiments of an American education, Joseph Heco and Sanders traveled via

Panama, arriving in San Francisco on November 24, 1854. Sanders again placed Heco in school for a few months, but the Panic of 1855 destroyed the ice-importing firm of Sanders and Brenham (a San Francisco partner), and Sanders had to cut off his support. Heco managed to continue school for six months more "with the aid of another kind friend," but when this unnamed friend was also hurt by the panic, Heco left school for good.[51]

In April 1856, Sanders helped the nineteen-year-old Heco get a job with Macondray & Co., a large commission firm on Sansome Street near Pine. Coincidentally, the ship *Auckland*, which had rescued the castaways five years earlier, had been carrying a shipment of sugar for this firm from Hong Kong. Heco worked there for the next year and a half. What he learned there and the contacts he made helped him later in Japan where he began his own business. Though he almost certainly could not have realized it at the time, as he implied he did in his 1863 memoirs, Heco came to see that a similar company in Japan would require seventy or eighty people. Macon-dray and Co. had only eight employees. He cited a number of factors for the greater efficiency of American firms: more technology, mechanization, "no empty formalities or ostentation," good salaries, "and people made to work without idleness."[52] Heco does not say exactly what his own duties were, but apparently he worked directly for junior partner T. G. Cary. In addition to commission, insurance, and banking activities, Macondray and Co. was the first tea importer in San Francisco. Later, exporting tea from Japan, Heco carried on an extensive correspondence with Frederick Macondray, Jr., son of the founder, and sent many items to him on commission in the 1860s and 1870s.[53]

California Senator William M. Gwin promised to find Heco a position with the State Department. [illegible] job materialized and the young man served for Gwin as a private secretary. Heco was never able to collect his full salary from Gwin.

[illegible]

A SENATOR'S PROTÉGÉ

At some point during his tenure at Macondray and Co., Heco caught the eye of Senator Gwin, whom he had earlier met through Sanders. The senator offered to take Heco to Washington, D.C., promising to help him obtain a position with the state department that would prepare him for a future assignment in Japan. Heco apparently thought the opportunity too good to pass up, and he left California with Gwin in September 1857.

On November 25, 1857, Gwin introduced Heco to Secretary of State Lewis Cass, and then they all went to the White House to meet President James Buchanan. The president agreed that Heco would be good in the State Department, but claimed there were no vacancies. Gwin suggested that Buchanan create one, but the president replied that as a senator, Gwin was in a better position to influence government appropriations in the next Congress. Heco remained with Gwin, working as a private secretary for several months. A State Department job never materialized and Heco asked Gwin to release him from service, saying he wanted to go to Baltimore where he had friends. The senator agreed and wrote the collector of the port of Baltimore, asking him to give Heco a temporary position.

Gwin owed Heco money. His salary (thirty dollars per month) came to $150, of which only fifty-five dollars had been paid. Of the ninety-five dollars remaining, Gwin subtracted seventy-five dollars to cover the cost of "proper" clothes bought at the insistence of Mrs. Gwin after their arrival in New York. Heco fumed at the paltry sum that remained. Gwin, a wealthy senator who owned plantations and slaves in the South, and who with his wife was a leader in society, had lured Heco away from an excellent job in San Francisco with promises he could not keep. And now, in a strange land, the senator set Heco "adrift with a precious twenty dollars!" To make matters worse, the collector of the port in Baltimore had no job for Heco either: "So much for the worth of the Senator's letter!!"[54]

THE FIRST JAPANESE AMERICAN

Presumably depressed and frustrated, Heco went to Baltimore, where the Sanders family welcomed him. When he ran out of money, San Francisco connections came to his rescue. He received a surprise letter from Boston written b the father of his old employer in San Francisco, T. G. Cary, who was then in China. The son had asked his father to give Heco money if he neede it. At about the same time, he received another letter from Lieutenant J. M. Brooke, USN, whom he had met through Senator Gwin in Washingto Brooke was to command an exploratory expedition to China and Japan, and offered Heco a clerk's position, providing passage to Japan. Heco's luck seemed to be turning. With money from the senior Cary, Heco prepared to join Brook in San Francisco, but Sanders suggested that Hec seek American citizenship first, which he did. Granted naturalized status by a judge, Heco became literally the first Japanese American; there would not be a second for many years.[55]

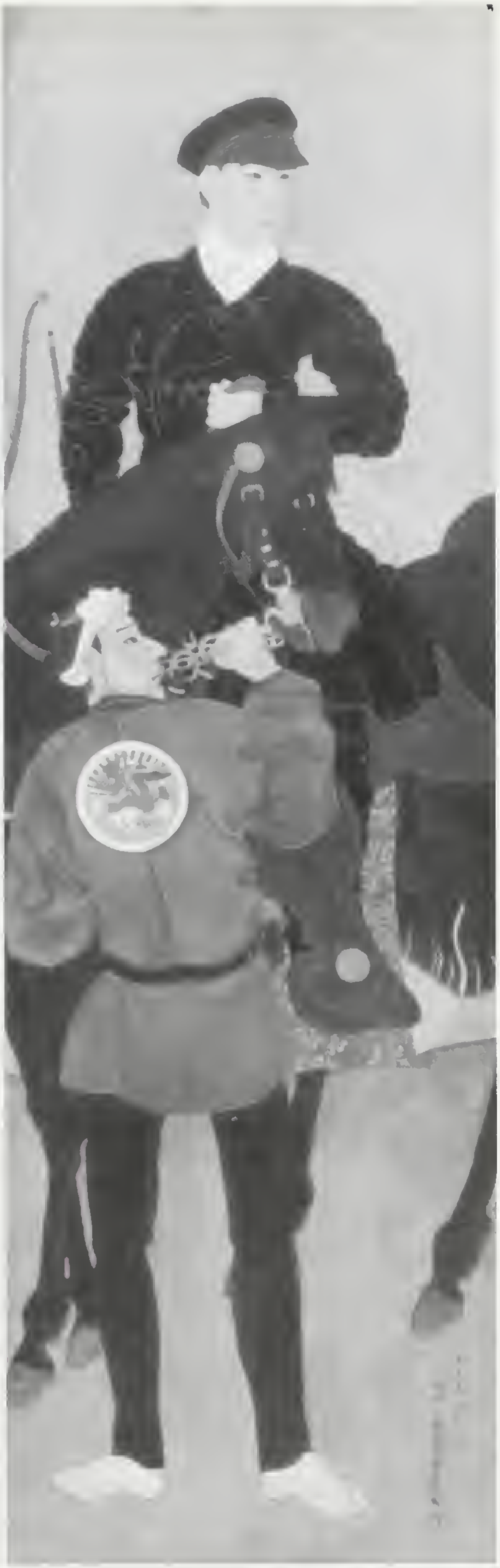
Back in San Francisco at the end of July 1858, Heco joined Brooke at Mare Island and sailed in late September on the schooner *Fenimore Coope* They reached Honolulu after forty-three days, an unusually long voyage, and found yet another group of five Japanese castaways who had been there for two years. The *Fenimore Cooper* left in late December, but ran into rough seas and Heco as usual was very seasick. After a month at sea, the ship was forced to return to Honolulu in early February 1859. They learned there that the United States and Japan had signed a commercial treaty.

Heco was eager leave the *Fenimore Cooper*, both because the small size of the ship aggravated his seasickness and because the new treaty spurred him to get back to Japan more quickly. He found passage on the clipper *Sea Serpent*, bound from San Francisco to Hong Kong. One of the passengers was an old San Francisco friend, Eugene M. Van Reed, who was going to Japan via China. Apparently, Heco and Van Reed had met in 1853, and Van Reed having learned some Japanese from Heco, was now heading for Japan to see what opportunities might await. Late in 1858, before Heco left on the *Fenimore Cooper*, the two of them had a photograph taken together in San Francisco.[56]

Arriving in Hong Kong in March 1859, Heco met Dan Ketch (Iwakichi), one of his fellow castaways. He had been in Canton with the British Consul there, who had just been appointed Consul General to Japan. Dan had returned to America at least once during the 1850s and had picked up enough English to be hired as translator for the British. Unfortunately, his flaunting of western culture and dress infuriated xenophobic Japanese. Shortly after returning to Japan, Dan Ketch was murdered in front of the British legation for being "puffed up with pride of place and . . . insolent and abrasive."[57] Heco also met Townsend Harris, the newly appointed Minister to Japan. Heco showed Harris his naturalization papers and the Minister agreed to "take charge" of Heco once they were in Japan. E. M. Door, the U.S. Consul for Kanagawa (Yokohama), who was with the Minister's party, hired Heco as interpreter, while his friend Van Reed was hired on as clerk in the same consulate.

In Shanghai, Heco learned about the fate of his remaining comrades from Otokichi, who was one of three 1832 castaways in North America. He was captured by Indians, rescued by the British, and from China, he attempted to return to Japan but had been forcibly rebuffed. Angered by the Japanese government's attitude, Otokichi gave up further attempts and settled in the Chinese city, where he provided support to other castaways who came there.

His comrades, Heco learned from Otokichi, had finally sailed with Commodore Perry to Japan, but most of them had been afraid to face Japanese officials. They had stayed below deck and returned to Shanghai. Otokichi took responsibility for them and later persuaded the Chinese to take them on one of their annual voyages to Nagasaki, where they were successfully repatriated. The two who had returned with Heco and Troy to San Francisco in late 1852, Kame and Tora, also eventually made it home. Tora, who worked for Wells Fargo for several years and who had "attained a fair knowledge of our language and habits," sailed for Japan on the bark *Melita* in late March 1859.[58]



Eugene Van Reed set up business in Japan following its opening to the West in the late 1850s. He is pictured here in a "Yokohama print" engraved by Sadahide Utagawa in 1861. It is inscribed "Uenriito" the Japanese version of Van Reed's name.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Several of Heco's acquaintances were eager to learn Japanese from him, and he himself quickly picked up a good command of English. Heco and his friend Eugene Van Reed were photographed together in San Francisco in 1858.

San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

In the end, only one member of the junk's crew, Sentaro, called Sam Patch by the Americans, actually accompanied Perry ashore on his first visit to Japan. Sentaro had been the next youngest on the junk after Heco. The two resented each other, and Heco does not even mention Sentaro in his memoirs.[59] Finally, on June 15, 1859, Joseph Heco himself left Shanghai on the *Mississippi*, and three days later entered Nagasaki harbor, a twenty-two year old American citizen employed by the consulate at Kanagawa.[60]

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Heco's return to Japan did not end his relationship with San Francisco. He did not get along either with the consul, E. M. Dorr or with Minister Harris. One evening, Heco, Van Reed, and Captain Brooke of the *Fenimore Cooper* (wrecked in a storm on the Japanese coast the year before) were Dorr's guests for dinner. An argument broke out when Heco related the poor treatment he had received on the cutter *Frolic* in 1853. The volatile Dorr upbraided Heco for criticizing the captain of that ship, who happened to be a friend. Van Reed and then Brooke quickly came to Heco's defense, and a duel nearly resulted between Dorr and Brooke. Van Reed calmed the situation and tempers cooled, but tensions remained.[61] Van Reed left the consulate shortly and Heco sometime later, going into private business as a commission agent in Yokohama. Financing for this venture came from San Francisco friends of T. G. Cary. The business continued for a year, with mixed results, during which Heco hired his old friend and mentor, Thomas Troy as his clerk when the latter arrived in Yokohama.[62]

Internal turmoil in Japan and mounting hostility and violence towards foreigners worried Heco. The assassination of his fellow castaway Iwakichi (Dan Ketch) in early 1860, followed a year later by the murder of Minister Harris's secretary, only increased his concern. Heco himself received warnings from friends "too frequent for my comfort." Frightened for his safety, he determined to leave Japan and return to the United States, partly to see old friends and partly in hopes of obtaining a better government job.[63] Arriving in San Francisco in mid-October 1861, his first stop was with his old friend and former employer T. G. Cary, who suggested that Heco would have a better chance of obtaining a government position if he went in person to Washington.

Armed with a flattering letter of introduction to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles, signed by Cary, other leading businessmen, and several government officials, Heco arrived in New York via Panama in December. The Boston branch of the Cary family introduced him to famed Harvard professor, Louis Agassiz, a Cary in-law. Agassiz offered to write letters of introduction to Secretary of State William Seward and Senator Charles Sumner. From Boston, Heco went to Baltimore to visit the Sanders family. Sanders himself offered to accompany Heco to Washington, introduce him to California Senator M. S. Latham, and help him secure a desirable government job.

Despite these impressive connections, again Heco failed to obtain a lucrative position, though Secretary Seward suggested he might resume his old post as interpreter. Thirty years later, when he wrote his memoirs, Heco reported that he met President Abraham Lincoln during this job search. His claim is plausible, but unlike the two previous presidential meetings, this one cannot be independently confirmed. One recent scholar suggests that Heco or his editor might have made up the Lincoln story to enhance sales. Support for this position lies in the fact that Heco did not mention the meeting in his first memoir, published just two years after such a meeting supposedly occurred.[64]

However, Heco's 1863 memoir did not mention anything at all about this return trip to the United States. The chronology of this first book ends with his return to Japan, perhaps a logical point to close his narrative. Also, he may have been still smarting from his failure to obtain the sought after government job, and so did not want to mention anything about the trip. And, perhaps he believed that mention of a third presidential meeting would not add that much. In 1861, when the Lincoln meeting supposedly occurred, or at the time of publication in 1863, Lincoln had not yet attained greatness or martyrdom. Thirty years later, however, there was a lot more prestige in having met the great man. We may never know if Heco actually met Lincoln. What we do know is that he returned to Japan, very disappointed at his bad luck with the job market. For a time, he worked as interpreter again, but soon resigned to resume business activities.

Retaining connections with the San Francisco firm of Macondray and Company in the 1860s and 1870s, Heco operated his own import and export commission business in Yokohama. Shortly after an 1865 business trip to Japan, Frederick Macondray, Jr., and Heco entered into a frequent business correspondence that continued over the next decade. Macondray sent Heco products for resale in Japan, and Heco in turn sent goods on commission to Macondray. Heco requested garden seeds and multiple copies of English language books, including biographies of Washington and Napoleon, atlases, and dictionaries. In return, he sent Macondray Japanese porcelain, paper, and even Japanese fishing rods (which Macondray had trouble selling). Macondray suggested sending cuttlefish and mushrooms, though "neither can stand a very high profit."[65] Their letters, usually strictly business, occasionally touched on more personal topics, such as the death of one of the senior partners in the firm, appreciation for photographs of Japan that Heco had sent, and the hope and expectation that President U. S. Grant would be re-elected.[66]

Heco may well have indirectly contributed to an increased American understanding of Japan. His next-door neighbor in Yokohama in the 1860s, Francis Hall, arrived in Japan as a correspondent for Horace Greeley's influential *New York Tribune* in 1859. His articles were the major source of American knowledge about Japan at the time, and since he and Heco often ate and traveled together, it is reasonable to assume that their conversations influenced Hall's reports.[67]

Still, Joseph Heco never achieved the degree of influence that he hoped and that others predicted he would have. As a young, eager, intelligent, and polite boy, he attracted a lot of attention, met some of the most influential political and intellectual men in the United States, traveled extensively, and adopted many American customs. When he returned to Japan in 1859, he was surely one of the best traveled and one of the best English speaking Japanese in the country. Only Manjiro came close, and it was Manjiro, not Heco, who was chosen to accompany the first Japanese diplomatic mission to the United States in 1860 as interpreter. Ironically, the scarcity of English-speaking Japanese meant that the language of Japanese diplomacy for many years after relations were established continued to be Dutch, the only western language with which the Japanese had some familiarity.[68]

In the eyes of Japanese officials, Heco's American experience was more a liability than an asset. Even Manjiro was suspect because of the time he had spent in the United States, and Heco had been in the United States longer, had become a naturalized citizen (a fact that he did not try to hide), and a Catholic (a fact that he wisely kept to himself when he first returned). In Japan, his low birth acted against him, and in the United States, the American government did not do much to help him. Aside from a couple of stints as consulate interpreter, he was never employed in a significant capacity. The fact is that he lived between two worlds, neither of which regarded him as the bridge between their cultures he desired to be. His San Francisco business connections served him better than his political ones. Heco did become a relatively successful businessman, and he managed to navigate through the tumultuous Japanese political situation, even developing friendships with new political leaders of the 1860s and 1870s. In Tokyo in 1897, he died at the age of sixty. Although not especially long, the life of this provincial boy had been transformed by shipwreck that led to a quantity of unusual experiences, mostly tied to the time he spent and the lasting relationships he developed in the city of San Francisco.

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NOTES

COLLECTIONS: THE EMPEROR'S CANE, P. 3

Bibliographic note: Robert Ernest Cowan wrote "Norton I, Emperor of the United States and Protector of Mexico: Joshua A. Norton, 1819-1880," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 2,3 (1923), 237-245 (and also published as a separate booklet by CHS in 1923). Other sources on Norton's life and times are David Warren Ryder, *San Francisco's Emperor Norton: The Story of Norton I, Emperor of America and Protector of Mexico* (San Francisco: Alex. Dulfer Printing and Lithographing Co., 1939); William Drury, *Norton I, Emperor of the United States* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1986); and William M. Kramer, *Emperor Norton of San Francisco: A Look at the Life and Death and Strange Burials of the Most Famous Eccentric of Gold Rush California* (Santa Monica: N.B. Stern, 1974), all of which are available in the North Baker Research Library at CHS headquarters in San Francisco.

Images credits:
Portrait of Joshua A. Norton, "Emperor," Bradley and Rulofson. Photographers: San Francisco, ca. 1875. California Historical Society, FN-08608

Emperor Norton Lunching with Bummer and Lazarus. George A. Berton Collection, California Historical Society, FN-13631

Emperor Norton's cane, n.d., approx. 36" long x 2 1/4" diameter. California Historical Society.

THE MERRY TRAMPS OF OAKLAND
BY MEREDITH ELIASSEN, PP. 6–19

William H.H. Murray inspired millions of Americans to go camping for enjoyment, creating the first wave of recreational camping in America, referred to as "Murray's Rush" in his *Adventures in the Wilderness, or, Camp-Life in the Adirondacks*, (Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co., 1869).

Helen Penniman Pardee's autograph album is the primary source for identifying members of the Merry Tramps. Single women may have included Helen and Etta Penniman, Sascha Amaset, Sarah (Sadie) P.E. Brown (of San Francisco), Georgietta Congdon, Gussie Kloss, Ella May Mason, and Mollie L. Melvin. Single men may have included Marius Dahlgren, Archibald Dewing, Frank and T. H. Fisher (of El Paso), M. J. Madison, Charles Mason, Harry Melvin, William Melvin, Samuel H. Smith, Will Stewart, E. P. Vandercook (of El Paso), and F. H. Wagner (also of El Paso). The album is in the collections of the Pardee Home Museum. Vicki Wiese, Registrar at the Pardee Home Museum, described the autograph book and Helen Pardee's quilt in "Helen Pardee and the Merry Tramps: New Exhibit on View at the Pardee Home," *Pardee Home Museum Newsletter* (June 1999).

Young, Terrence, quoted on the significance of "Murray's Rush" on American popular culture, in "Camping Technology," *Modern Marvels*, a VHS documentary produced by A & E Television Networks, c1990, 2000, VHS, Documentary Cat. No. AAE-42862. Young is a geography professor at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

CALIFORNIA'S RECALL
BY JOSHUA SPIVAK, PP. 20–37

Thomas Sitton, *John Randolph Haynes: California Progressive* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 85. Also see "Espee Directors Meet," *Los Angeles Times*, (September 7, 1900) for example of the use of the term "Espee."

Fremont Older, *My Own Story* (New York: MacMillian Co., 1926), 176-177.

Richard L. McMormick, "Public Life in Industrial America, 1877-1917" in *The New American History* Eric Foner, ed., (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 106-107.

Thomas K. McCraw, "The Progressive Legacy" in *The Progressive Era*, Lewis Gould, ed., (New York: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1974), 185.

The Initiative and Referendum Institute at http://www.iandrinstitute.org/statewide_i&r.htm. The popular referendum is different than the legislative referenda, which allows voters to approve legislative acts. Every state has the legislative referenda in some fashion.

Joseph Zimmerman, *The Recall: Tribunal of the People* (Westport: Praeger Publishers 1997), 15. Eighteen allow its use for state officials. http://www.ncsl.org/ programs/legman/elect/recallprovision.htm

See Peter Schrag, *Paradise Lost: California's Experience, America's Future* (New York: The New Press, 1988). Also see David Broder's *Democracy Derailed: Initiative Campaigns and the Power of Money* (New York: Harcourt Inc., 2000) for a look at the initiative industry.

Erica Werner, "California recall campaign could be example for nation," *Associated Press*, (July 7, 2003).

"Destruction of a Republican Form of Government," *Los Angeles Times* (September 9, 1911). In addition, President William Howard Taft vetoed Arizona's constitution because it provided for the use of the recall against the judiciary.

William Howard Taft, *Popular Govern-ment: Its Essence, Its Permanence and Its Perils* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press,1913), 81.

Dr. John Randolph Haynes. *Direct Government in California*, Address read at the National Popular Government League on July 5 and 6, 1916. Senate Document No. 738. 4.

Thomas Cronin, *Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum, and Recall* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press: 1989), 131, and Laura Tallian, Direct Democracy (Los Angeles: People's Press, 1977), 13-15.

Sitton, *John Randolph Haynes*, 38. Also see Frederick L. Bird and Frances M. Ryan, *The Recall of Public Officers* (New York: Macmillan, 1930) 3. Regardless of which version is correct, Haynes became acquainted with the Switzerland version of direct democracy; as he discussed it at length before the Board of Freeholders. *Los Angeles Times* (September 29, 1900).

Robert Luce, Legislative Principles (Boston: Riverside Press, 1930), 488. The laws for the General Court of the Massachu-setts Bay Colony, adopted in 1631, called for the election of Assistants and a provision that they "shall see cause for any defect or misbehavior to remove any one or more of the Assistants." The Massachusetts charter of 1691 said, "Councillors or Assistants or any of them shall or may at any time hereafter be removed or displaced from their respective Places or Trusts." The Federal and State Constitutions Colonial Charters, and other Organic Laws of the States Territories and Colonies now or heretofore forming The United States of America, Francis Thorpe, ed., (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Press, 1906), 1879.

[15] Pennsylvania's constitution of 1776 said "any delegate (to the Continental Congress) may be superseded at any time, by the General Assembly appointing another in his stead." Vermont adopted the same language in their 1777 constitution

[16] Article V of the Articles of Confederation held: "For the more convenient management of the general interests of the United States, delegates shall be annually appointed in such manner as the Legislature of each State shall direct, to meet in Congress on the first Monday in every year, with a power reserved to each State to recall its delegates, or any of them, at any time within the year, and to send others in their stead, for the remainder of the year." According to delegate and anti-Federalist John Lansing, the recall was never exercised. *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution by the General Convention at Philadelphia in 1787*, Jonathan Elliot, ed., (Philadelphia: J.J. Lippincott Company, 1891), 2:299-300.

[17] The Virginia Plan, proposed by Edmund Randolph, allowed the recall for the members of the first house of the legislature, who would have been directly elected by the people. The convention passed Charles Pinckney's motion to strike out the practice, along with a ban on reelection for the members of the first house. Elliot, *The Debates*, 5:12, 5:185.

[18] Alexander Hamilton, *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, Harold Syrett, ed., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 5:69.

[19] State legislatures used "Instructions" to try to control their senators, but it was up to each individual senator to decide whether these Instructions should be followed. Many senators resigned rather than oblige; others simply ignored them. Regardless, Instructions did not have the force of law that recalls have. See Rod Farmer, "Power to the People: The Progressive Movement for the Recall, 1890s to 1920," *New England Journal of History* (Winter 2001), 59-83. Also see Cronin, *Direct Democracy*, 24-26, Luce, *Legislative Principles*, 461-491.

[20] *National Party Platforms 1840-1972*, compiled by Donald Bruce Johnson and Kirk H. Porter (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1973) 96. Zimmerman,*The Recall*, 9.

[21] Sitton, *John Randolph Haynes*, 35-36.

[22] Before Oregon approved the state-level recall in 1908, South Dakota, Utah (1900), Oregon (1902), Nevada (1904), Montana (1906), Oklahoma (1907), Maine (1908) and Missouri (1908) all accepted some of the other direct democracy provisions. Cronin, *Direct Democracy*, 51.

[23] Sitton, *John Randolph Haynes*, 36.

[24] *Los Angeles Times* (September 29, 1900).

[25] Board of Freeholder member Sherman Page said "it would be an experiment for which no necessity exists." "Initative and Referendum: Freeholders Adopt Those and a Recall Clause – Latter was Opposed." *Los Angeles Times*, (October 10, 1900). Haynes was able to fight off this opposition.

[26] See Sitton, *John Randolph Haynes*, at 41 for use of the term "Grand Bounce."

[27] See Bird and Ryan, *The Recall of Public Officers* ,27-28, for why the charter took several years to be approved. Cronin mentions that several small localities had adopted the recall prior to 1900, though he does not name them. Cronin, Direct Democracy, 130. Thanks to Rod Farmer for pointing this out.

[28] In an attempt to stave off the recall, Harper resigned before the vote. This gambit failed, as the court held that the recall would go forward against his successor. Bird and Ryan, *The Recall of Public Officers*, 239-240. In 2003, some commentators discussed a similar proposal to prevent the Gray Davis recall, with Davis resigning and Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante taking over and preempting the recall. Nothing came of this plan. Harley Sorensen, "How Davis Could Stop the Recall Madness," *San Francisco Chronicle* (July 28, 2003).

[29] James Barnett, *The Operation of the Initiative, Referendum and Recall in Oregon* (New York: Macmillian, 1915), 189.

[30] Frank Norris, *The Octopus: A Story of California. See William Deverell, Railroad Crossing: Californians and the Railroad*, 1850-1910 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), for an in-depth examination of this school of history and the impact of *The Octopus* on reformers as well as latter-day historians.

[31] George Mowry, *The California Progressives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), 9.

[32] Deverell, *Railroad Crossing*, 41. Sitton *John Randolph Haynes*, 86.

[33] Haynes, originally wary of the League's chances of success, preferred to focus his attention on the Direct Legislation League. His view changed with the League's successes. Sitton, *John Randolph Haynes*, 90

[34] Franklin Hichborn felt that the Ruef prosecution was critical to the Progressives later success. "Had there been no San Francisco graft prosecution, there would in 1910, have been no successful political uprising in California." Franklin Hichborn *"The System" as uncovered by the San Francisco Graft Prosecution*, (San Francisco Press of James H. Barry, 1915), 464.

[35] See Franklin Hichborn, *The Story of th California Legislature 1909*. (San Francisc Press of the James H. Berry Company, 1909) for a story of the Espee's chief political lobbyist stopping passage of the initiative with one phone call.

[36] Spencer Olin, *California's Prodigal Son* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 20.

[37] *Fresno Republican* (Oct. 31, 1906), as quoted in Mowry, 62.

[38] Johnson took over the graft trials after the first prosecutor, Francis Heney, was sho in the head and wounded. Heney was also discussed, and rejected, as a possible candidate for governor. He later became a bitter enemy of Johnson.

[39] Michael A. Weathers and Hal Bochin, *Hiram Johnson: Political Revivalist* (Latham, MD.: University Press of America, 1995), 22.

[40] Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 253.

[41] Olin, *Prodigal Sons*, 31. Bell was backed by the Southern Pacific as "the lesser of two reform evils." Sitton, *John Randolph Haynes*, 91.

[42] Franklin Hichborn, *The Story of the California Legislature of 1911* (San Francisco: Press of the James H. Berry Company, 1911), 47

[43] Inaugural Address of Governor Hiram Johnson. January 3, 1911. Hichborn, 1911, iv.

[44] Mowry, *California Progressives* ,14. The state Supreme Court had decided fifty-seven of seventy-nine cases in the company's favor from 1895 to 1910. Olin, *Prodigal Sons*, 3.

In addition to the recall of judges, there vas a popular movement for the recall of udicial decisions. This recall would allow : "popular curb" on the judicial power to leclare acts unconstitutional. It has since iearly disappeared from the literature, and t was not mentioned by either of the two nost recent books on the recall. According o Bird and Ryan, after the Supreme Court ıf Colorado declared it void in 1921, it disıppeared as a topic of debate. However, in 911-12 it was a major issue, and in fact played ı large role in the Taft-Roosevelt split in the 912 election. See Edward Hartnett, "Why s the Supreme Court of the United States ʾrotecting State Judges from Popular Democracy?" *75 Texas Law Review* (April 997) at 907 for an interesting discussion ıf the 1912 recall of judicial decisions debate.

Alfred Kelly, Winfred Harbison, and Herman Belz, *The American Constitution* 7th Edition (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), 404.

Hichborn, 1911, 138.

Taft, Popular Government, 171.

Hichborn, 1911, 102.

Ibid, 103.

Ibid, 103.

Los Angeles Times (February 4, 1911).

Ibid.

Los Angeles Times (February 5, 1911).

Page Smith, America Enters the World: A People's History of the Progressive Era and World War I Vol. 7 (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 797.

Los Angeles Times (February 4, 1911).

Bird and Ryan, *Recall of Public Officers*, 49.

Hichborn, 1911, 112. See also Mowry, *California Progresives*, 142.

Sacramento Bee (March 7, 1911).

Los Angeles Times (February 16, 1911).

Hichborn, 1911, 137.

Los Angeles Times (October 10, 1911).

Los Angeles Times (October 11, 1911).

Olin, *Prodigal Sons*, 5.

"Triple Freak of Initiative, Referendum and Recall certainly carried." *Los Angeles Times* (October 11, 1911).

Haynes, *Direct Government*, 9.

See Cronin, *Direct Democracy*, at 139-141 for a detailed look at the Feinstein recall. The radical left-wing White Panthers, who opposed Feinstein's support of gun-control provisions, started the recall. As with the later Gray Davis recall, there was a low ten percent signature requirement to get on the ballot. Other interest groups glommed onto the recall, but Feinstein garnered eighty-one percent of the vote in the election.

[68] "Rose Bird" *California Journal,* November 1, 1999. Bird, Justices Joseph Grodin and Cruz Reynoso were voted out of office in a mandatory retention election, a separate provision in the California Constitution. It is widely, though erroneously, believed that Bird was recalled. See John Balzar, "Few Rules to Go By: Justice Bird's Recall Becoming Epic Battle," *Los Angeles Times* (April 7, 1985) and the subsequent correction on April 10, 1985 for an example of this error.

"Recallers' Bark Likely Bigger Than Their Bite," *The Recorder* (May 16, 2000). Bird and Ryan cite four cases of judicial recalls. There was an attempt to recall the judge who granted O.J. Simpson custody of his children, though it didn't get on the ballot. *Associated Press* (March 6, 1997).

In addition to Harper, Mayor Frank Shaw was recalled and removed in 1938. Shaw's administration "considered the most corrupt in city's history," was supported by Haynes. Sitton, 243. Haynes died before the Shaw recall.

No other official elected by a state-wide vote, such as the Treasurer or Attorney General, has ever faced a recall.

Dean E. Murphy, "A Rebellion on the 32nd Try," *New York Times* (October 8, 2003). *Los Angeles Times* (October 30, 1994). Recalls since 1994 were added to the *LA Times* total.

Black pleaded guilty to the charges and received a 10-year jail sentence.

Los Angeles Times (October 19, 1912).

Los Angeles Times (January 3, 1913).

Bird and Ryan, *Recall of Public Officers*, 272-273.

Ibid.

Ibid, 274.

The act allowed citizens to sue the owner of a house of prostitution, and close the building as a nuisance. Franklin Hichborn, *The Story of the California Legislature 1915* (San Francisco: Press of the James H. Berry Company, 1915), 67. Also see "Senator Grant Faces Recall Poll Thursday," *San Francisco Bulletin* (October 7, 1914).

Bird and Ryan, *Recall of Public Officers*, 276.

Hichborn, 1915, 78.

Los Angeles Times (October 10, 1914).

"Senator Grant Faces Recall Poll Thursday," *San Francisco Bulletin* (October 7, 1914).

"Grant Recall a Sensation. Was a Democratic Tool of Gov. Johnson," *Los Angeles Times* (October 10, 1914). The article describes the recall as an "absolute repudiation of Gov. Johnson's administration." Johnson was reelected later that year.

Governor Johnson's biennial message to the 1915 Legislature as quoted in Hichborn, 1915, 102.

Ibid, 101-102.

Lawrence Sych, "State Recall Elections: What Explains Their Outcomes?" *Comparative State Politics* (October 1996), 20. The only recall was a Wisconsin legislator in 1933.

Ibid, 9.

The recall proponents attempted to use other issues, such as corruption and voter anger in the campaign, but newspaper accounts focused on the gun-control issue. See William Hamilton, "Gun Control Stance Makes California Legislator Target of Recall" *Washington Post* (April 10, 1994). "NRA Endorsed bid to recall gun-control advocate Roberti" *Associated Press* (April 1, 1994).

Lisa M. Krieger, "Gun Lobby draws bead on Roberti for recall; State Senator's foes organize to make him an example because of his assault-weapon bills," *San Francisco Examiner* (March 27, 1994). "Roberti Slays NRA dragon," *California Journal* (May 1, 1994).

"Treasurer" *California Journal Weekly* (November 21, 1994).

Orange County Register (June 9, 1994).

Edward Epstein, "Recall Victory Gives Roberti an Edge in Treasurer's Race" *San Francisco Chronicle* (April 14, 1994). Also "Roberti slays NRA dragon" *California Journal* (May 1, 1994).

Fresno Bee (June 25, 1994).

The change allowed recalls to be delayed and combined with a regularly scheduled election if the recall was scheduled to take place within 180 days of the election. "Senate Tries to Amend Recalls," *San Francisco Examiner* (May 10, 1994).

"C.A. Upholds $1.1 Million Fine on Roberti Antagonists, Largest Penalty Ever Imposed Under Reform Act," *Metropolitan News Enterprise* (May 30, 2003). With interest, the penalty has increased to $1.1 million.

California Journal Weekly (December 18, 1995).

Jon Matthews, "Republican says he'll seize Assembly post from Brown," *Sacramento Bee* (November 11, 1994).

James Richardson, *Willie Brown: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 373. See also ibid. According to Richardson, the Democrats were especially concerned that Brulte would be able to consolidate the victory and manage to keep the Assembly Republican for years to come.

A Republican, Richard Mountjoy, was elected to both the Senate and the Assembly. By a 40-39 vote, which Mountjoy was not allowed to participate in, he was forced to take his Senate seat. A Republican was later elected to the seat. See E. Dotson Wilson and Brian Ebbert, *California's Legislature* (Sacramento: Office of the Chief Clerk, California State Assebly, 2000) 93-95 and Richardson, *Willie Brown*, 377-379, for a discussion of the maneuverings.

"Assemblyman Defeats GOP Recall Attempt," *San Francisco Chronicle* (August 23, 1995).

Greg Lucas, "GOP Backed Recall Succeeds – Horcher Thrown Out Vote could affect S.F. mayoral race," *San Francisco Chronicle* (May 18, 1995). See Richardson, *Willie Brown*, 102, 156, for some discussion on the length of the Wilson-Brown relationship.

"Horcher Recalled – Emphatically," *California Journal Weekly* (May 22, 1995). The California Assembly has a history of cross-party voting for Speakers. Willie Brown was elected Speaker due to Republican votes, and he used Republican support to ward off a challenge to his rule in 1988. See Richardson, *Willie Brown*, 265-271, 342.

Sacramento Bee (July 2, 1995).

Editorial, "Abuse of the Recall," *San Francisco Chronicle* (August 24, 1995).

"Assemblyman Defeats GOP Recall Attempt," *San Francisco Chronicle* (August 23, 1995).

Charles Price, "Paying the Tab for-Recall Elections," *California Journal* (June 1, 1996). While Price points out the other benefits that Republican leaders expected to receive from a successful recall, specifically increased power over a host of local issues, there is little doubt that the reason for the recall was the Speakership fight.

There was approximately twenty-eight percent voter turnout. By the time of the Machado recall vote, Brown was no longer Speaker. Zimmerman, *The Recall*, 85. An additional postscript for the Machado recall was that Machado sought $889,000 in reimbursement for his recall expenses as allowed by California law. Machado's request was denied, and he chose not to fight it in court. Sam Stanton, "Davis win could cost state millions," *Sacramento Bee* (July 31, 2003).

B. Drummond Ayres Jr., "California Speaker Frustrates G.O.P. One Last Time," New York Times (June 6, 1995).

A.G. Block, "A Twisted Tale of Revenge," *California Journal* (January 1, 1996). Allen's discontent with the Republicans was based on Brulte's support for one of her opponents in a primary for a state Senate seat. After Allen's election, Brulte stepped down as Republican leader to run for the state Senate.

"Two-Cents Commentary," *California Journal* (February 1, 1996).

Greg Lucas, "Denouncements of New Assembly Speaker Get Uglier; Republican fax attack fuels rumors," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 15, 1995).

San Francisco Chronicle (June 15, 1995).

Mary Lynne Vellinga and Jon Matthews, "Republicans Get Their Revenge on 'Traitor' Setencich," *Sacramento Bee* (March 28, 1996).

"3rd Speaker's Aide to admit election fraud; Pringle worker implicated in Allen recall campaign," *San Francisco Chronicle* (March 13, 1996).

Peter Schrag, "Recall Ad Absurdum," *Sacramento Bee* (August 2, 1995).

"The Politics of Recall" *California Journal* (July 1, 1995).

North Dakota Governor Lynn J. Frazie was recalled and removed in 1921. Frazier was later elected to the United States Senate Arizona Governor Evan Mecham was scheduled to face a recall vote in 1988, but he was impeached and convicted before th vote took place. The Arizona Supreme Cou then ruled that the new Governor would no have to face the recall vote.

See Michael Lewis, "The Personal is the Antipolitical" *New York Times Magazine* (September 28, 2003), for an interesting search into the motives for the recall.

Tom Chorneau "Davis downfall rooted in his personality and political style," *Associated Press* (October 8, 2003). Matt Welch, "Bad Boys Get Spanked: Recall was about one important issue – firing Gray Davis," *Reasononline* (October 9, 2003).

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"Crisis in California," *California Journa* (August 1, 2003).

Michael Finnegan, "Davis Seeks to Shif Focus to Recall Backers," *Los Angeles Time* (June 24, 2003).

Dan Weintraub, "The Making of a Revol and a 2-Man Race for Governor," *Sacrament Bee* (October 5, 2003). "Davis had become the modern day equivalent of the Californi pols who did the railroads' bidding."

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Mitchell Landsberg, "The Recall Campaign; Question of Fairness," *Los Angeles Times* (September 14, 2003).

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Daniel Weintraub, "Facts and Fiction about the California Recall Election," *Sacramento Bee* (October 7, 2003). 129. Weintraub, "The Making of a Revolt." Megan Garvey, "Talk Radio Beats the Drum for Recall," *Los Angeles Times* (July 27, 2003).

Robert Salladay, "Davis recall drive runs low on funds," *San Francisco Chronicle* (April 27, 2003); Margaret Talev, "Long Road for Davis Recall Try," *Sacramento Bee* (May 11, 2003).

[30] Dan Morain and Gregg Jones, "Rep. Issa aunches New Davis Recall," *Los Angeles imes* (May 6, 2003). Margaret Talev, California' governor's recall no impulse im for Rep. Darrell Issa," *Sacramento ee* (June 16, 2003). According to Weintraub, Facts and Fiction" 900,000 of the 1.6 mil-ion signatures for the recall were gathered y paid professionals, rather than volunteers.

[31] See Bird and Ryan, *Recall of Public fficers*, for a discussion of the rules of cities n California. San Francisco also placed a equirement that called for a minimum of ,000 and maximum of 15,000 signatures eeded to qualify.

[32] This law is only for state-wide officers. here is a twenty percent signature require-nent for state legislators.

[33] Olin, *Prodigal Sons*, 44-45.

[34] Tim Rutten, "Politics in the public inter-st," *Los Angeles Times* (August 27, 2003).

[35] Margaret Talev, "Stress Elections Cost, ollsters Tell Davis," *Sacramento Bee* (July 5, 2003). One of the committees defend-ng Davis was named "Californians against he costly recall."

[36] Timothy Noah, "Does the GOP Subvert emocracy: Gray Davis may be onto some-hing," *Slate* (August 21, 2003); "Independents re Urged to Vote Against Recall," *San ose Mercury News* (September 8, 2003).

[37] According to the Secretary of State, the emocrats have a 7% voter registration dvantage, which translates into 1.3 million nore Democrats than Republicans. However, he number of independents has been ris-ng. Jewel Gopwani, "Party affiliation rates vane for state voting," *Contra Costa Times* February 12, 2002).

[38] 3.2 million absentee ballots were request-d, and according to one report, 2.2 million vere returned. However, there has not been n official number released by the state. ike Zapler, "Returned absentee ballots hit ecord numbers before today's election," *an Jose Mercury News* (October 7, 2003).

[39] Phillip J. LaVelle, "Issa quits race, but is onfident of 'brighter day,'" *San Diego nion-Tribune* (August 8, 2003).

[40] John Broder, "Prominent Republican Vithdraws From California Race," *New ork Times* (August 24, 2003).

[41] New Jersey in 1995 and Minnesota in 996.

[42] National Civic League and 2001 ICMA Municipal Form of Government Survey, at http://www.iandrinstitute.org/Recall.htm

[43] Sych, *State Recall Elections*, 7.

[44] Leonard Sykes, Jr. "Voters give George the boot; Coggs wins 6th District Recall," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (October 22 2003). State Senator George Petak was re-called in 1996, which switched the Senate from Republican to Democrat. Zimmerman, *The Recall*, 90.

[45] "Group Plans Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn Recall," (August 26, 2003). "Dane said the recall effort against California Gov. Gray Davis has emboldened the committee." There was an attempt to recall Governor Jesse Ventura of Minnesota in 1999, but the state judiciary blocked it, as provided for by Minnesota law.

[46] Cronin, *Direct Democracy*, 5.

[47] H.J. Res. 86, 105th Congress. Another Congressman, Mark Neumann signed a petition to recall Wisconsin's two Democratic Senators over their position on abortion. Julie Cohen, "Mark Neumann, Republican Hothead," *The Economist* (May 3, 1997). The courts ruled that a U.S. Senator cannot be recalled. In addition, in 1995, California Senatorial candidate Michael Huffington, who spent $30 million of dollars of his own money in a losing Senate bid in 1994, and whose ex-wife Arianna ran for election in the Davis Recall, was set to hold a press conference calling for the recall of Senator Dianne Feinstein, the winning candidate in the election. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Huffington did not hold the press conference after he "was advised that, by law, a U.S. Senator cannot be recalled" Susan Yoachum "Huffington Plan for a Recall is Recalled," *San Francisco Chronicle* (February 27, 1995).

[48] "Term Limits for Judges," *New Jersey Law Journal* (September 4, 1995)

GOLDEN GATE CASTAWAY
BY ROBERT F. OAKS, PP. 38–58

[1] For the background of these laws and for a good sample of drifter stories, see Katherine Plummer, *The Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors, Japanese Sea Drifters in the North Pacific*, (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society, 1991); Charles Wolcott Brooks, "Report of Japanese Vessels wrecked in the North Pacific Ocean, from the Earliest Records to the Present Time," *Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences VI*, 1875 (1876).

[2] Plummer, *Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors*, pp. 7, 9-19; Brooks, "Report of Japanese Vessels wrecked in the North Pacific;" Katherine Plummer, *A Japanese Glimpse at the Outside World 1839-1843: The Travels of Jirokichi in Hawaii, Siberia and Alaska* (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1991), vii-x; Masao Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them, The First Japanese Embassy to the United States (1860)* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1979), p. 8.

[3] Stephen W. Kohl, "Strangers in a Strange Land: Japanese Castaways and the Opening of Japan," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (Seattle) 73, 1 (January 1982); Grace P. Morris, "Wreck of a Japanese Junk, 1834," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* (Salem, OR) 38, 2 (1937). In 1875, Charles Wolcott Brooks presented to the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco one of the earliest studies of Japanese castaways. He analyzed sixty occurrences, four in the seventeenth century (1613 to 1694), three in the eighteenth century (1710 to 1782), six from 1804 to 1820, eleven from 1831 to 1848, and thirty-six from 1850 to 1876. In the twenty-three cases where numbers of survivors were mentioned, there were 293 people, averaging 12 per junk, ranging from three to thirty-five. In fifteen cases where the duration of drifting was mentioned, the average was slightly more than seven months. Brooks, "Report on Japanese Vessels."

[4] Amasa Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels* (Boston: E.G. House for the author, 1817), 400-403, 410-411.

[5] Stephen W. Kohl, "Strangers in a Strange Land;" Plummer, *A Japanese Glimpse at the Outside World 1839-1843*, pp. vii-x.

[6] Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki: Floating on the Pacific Ocean* (Los Angeles: Glen Dawson, 1955) trans. Tush Motofuji from the 1863 edition, p. 5; Joseph Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese; What he has seen and the people he has met in the course of the last forty years*, James Murdoch, ed., 2 vols. (Yokohama: Yokohama Printing & Publishing Co., Ltd., [1892, 1895]), I, 33-50. The account of the shipwreck and rescue is based on these two books written by

Joseph Heco. For a discussion on the differences between the two accounts (written thirty years apart) and their reliability, see John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to American and Hawaii, 1850-1880* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), pp. 24-27.

[7] Heco, *Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 57.

[8] *Ibid.*, 63.

[9] *Ibid.*, 68-70.

[10] Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers*, 27-32; Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki*, p. 14.

[11] See the March 5, 1851 editions of the newspapers *Alta California, Daily California Courier*, and *Daily Pacific News*, all of which noted the arrival of the Japanese.

[12] *Alta California*, March 5, 1851.

[13] Daniel Webster to William A. Graham, May 9, 1851, in J.G. de Roulhac Hamilton, ed., *The Papers of William Alexander Graham*, 5 vols. (Raleigh, NC: State Department of Archives and History, 1957-1976), IV, 90-91.

[14] *Evening Picayune*, March 17, 1851.

[15] Kohl, "Strangers in the Land"; Morris, "Wreck of a Japanese Junk"; and Brooks, "Report of Japanese Vessels."

[16] Donald R. Bernard, *The Life and Times of John Manjiro* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992); Hisakazu Kaneko, *Manjiro, The Man Who Discovered America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956; Plummer, *Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors*, pp. 138-160. Even though San Francisco papers continued to refer to the Auckland castaways as the first Japanese to visit North America, there were occasional references to Manjiro's earlier visit. See *Evening Picayune*, March 28, 1851.

[17] Helen Throop Pratt, "The California Letters of Edward Hotchkiss," *Quarterly of the California Historical Society* XII, 2 (June 1933).

[18] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 89-92.

[19] For the condition of San Francisco streets and attempts to improve them, see Robert Oaks, "The Origins of Bay Area Public Transportation, or 'Do You Know the Way to San Jose,'" *The Argonaut: Journal of the San Francisco Historical Society*, XV, 1 (2003), pp. 50-55.

[20] *Alta California* and the *Picayune*, March 18, 1851.

[21] Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki*, 23-32; Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 92-99.

[22] Ibid.

[23] *California Daily Courier*, the *Alta California*, and the *Picayune*, March 20, 1851; *Daily Pacific News*, March 21, 1851.

[24] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 92-99

[25] *California Daily Courier*, March 17, 1851; *Alta California*, March 22, 1851.

[26] *California Daily Courier*, March 17, 1851. Possibly Heco himself did not go on this excursion. The paper reported that only fifteen Japanese visited and that the youngest was sixteen years old. There were seventeen in the entire group and Heco was fourteen at the time, but it is impossible to know whether this discrepancy is the result of inaccurate reporting or Heco's not participating.

[27] *Alta California*, March 22, 1851.

[28] *Ibid.*, March 23, 1851.

[29] *California Daily Courier*, March 24, March 26, March 29, 1851; *Alta California*, March 27, 1851; *Daily Pacific News*, March 27, 1851.

[30] *Alta California*, March 29, 1851; *Evening Picayune*, April 2, 1851.

[31] U.S. Revenue Cutter *Polk*, logbook, March 22, 25, 1851, Record Group 26, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

[32] *Alta California*, April 5, April 7, 1851.

[33] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 100-106; *Polk* logbook, September 10, 1851.

[34] Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki*, 32-24; Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese;* I, 100-106

[35] Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki*, 32-34

[36] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*; I, 100-106. The ship's log does not specifically mention what duties the Japanese performed, but in the early days of their stay the daily number of rations served was around forty, plus seventeen Japanese. By December, the number of daily rations provided was for forty men, *including* the seventeen Japanese. See *Polk* logbook, December 2, 1851.

[37] *Polk*, logbook.

[38] *Alta California*, October 25, October 30, 1851.

[39] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese;* I, 100-106

[40] Soule, Frank et al., The Annals of San Francisco, reprint of first edition, 1855 (Berkeley: Berkeley Hills Books, 1999), pp 329-333, 344-347.

[41] Lotchin, Roger W., *San Francisco 1846-1856, From Hamlet to City* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974), pp. 193-201.

[42] *Polk* logbook, August 11, August 14, September 30, 1851.

[43] *Alta California*, February 18, 1852.

[44] *Polk* logbook, February 28, 1852.

[45] Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki*, p. 35 Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 106-13

[46] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese;* I, 113-123

[47] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 113-123.

[48] *Alta California*, June 28, 1853.

[49] Norman E. Saul, "Beverly C. Sanders an the Expansion of American Trade with Russia 1853-1855," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 67, 2 (1972), pp. 156-157.

[50] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 125-134.

[51] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*; I, 134-143; Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki* 41-42; for the early ice trade in San Francisco see Saul, "Beverly C. Sanders," pp.157-168. Saul suggests that more than the Panic wa involved with Sanders' financial problems. See also Robert F. Oaks, "Ice to Early San Francisco," *The Argonaut: Journal of the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society*, XIII, 1 (2002), pp. 58-63.

[52] Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki*, 55-56.

[53] Elizabeth Grubb Lampen, *Captain Frederick Macondray* 1803-1862 (Privately Printed, 1994), Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; Frederick Macondray Jr., copybooks, 1864-1880, 2 vols., Frederick W. Macondray Papers, 1821-1880, MS. 3140, California Historical Society.

[54] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*; I, 147-54.

[55] Heco's naturalization raised questions a few years later, since that privilege was restricted by law to "free white persons." The judge who granted Heco his citizenship obviously considered him white. The law would later be revised, though a few

ther Japanese obtained American citizenhip over the next several years. See Van ant, *Pacific Pioneers*, p. 44.

[6] Albert Altman, "Eugene Van Reed, A Reading Man in Japan 1859-1872," *Historical Review of Berks County*, XXX,1 (1964-1965), pp. 7-31.

[7] F. G. Notehelfer, ed., *Japan Through American Eyes, The Journal of Francis Hall*, 1859-1866 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), pp. 72-73; Plummer, "Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors, pp. 206-207.

[8] *San Francisco Herald*, Steamer Edition, March 21, 1859.

[9] Plummer, *Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors*, pp. 203-204, 210-211; M.C. Perry, *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan*, Sidney Wallach, ed. (London: Macdonald, 1954), pp. 147-148.

[60] Hikozo (Joseph Heco), *Hyoryu Ki*, 56-58; Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*; I, 155-198.

[61] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 216-218.

[62] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 235, 240-241, 277; Van Sant, Pacific Pioneers, p. 46.

[63] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 278; Notehelfer, ed., *Japan Through American Eyes*, pp. 15, 204.

[64] Heco, *The Narrative of a Japanese*, I, 279-305. Some historians such as Katherine Plummer and Carl Sandburg accept Heco's account at face value. Van Sant is skeptical. See Plummer, *Shogun's Reluctant Ambassadors*, pp. 204-205, Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers*, pp. 42-43; and Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, 4 vols. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1939) I, 376-377. There are other examples of Heco's imagination getting carried away. In his 1863 work, he tells of watching a battle between American and Mexican forces from a warship. It is difficult to see how this was possible, either geographically or chronologically.

[65] Macondray to Heco, September 6, September 15, 1875, Macondray, copybooks.

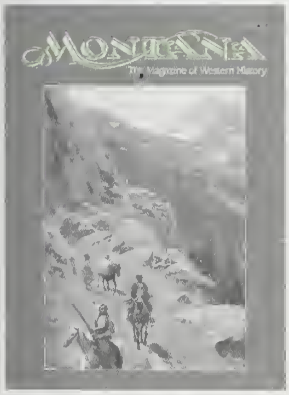
[66] *Ibid.*, March 8, 1866, September 10, 1874, November 15, 1875.

[67] Notehelfer, *Japan Through American Eyes*, 12-13, 186, n. 6.

[68] Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them*, pp. 11, 26. Good as his English was, Heco's command was far from perfect. His *Narrative*, which he wrote in English, required substantial editing before publication. See Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them*, p. 189, n. 15.

"Once you see this place you cant really Love any other part of the world."

—John Vachon, Farm Security Administration photographer



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BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

Where I Was From

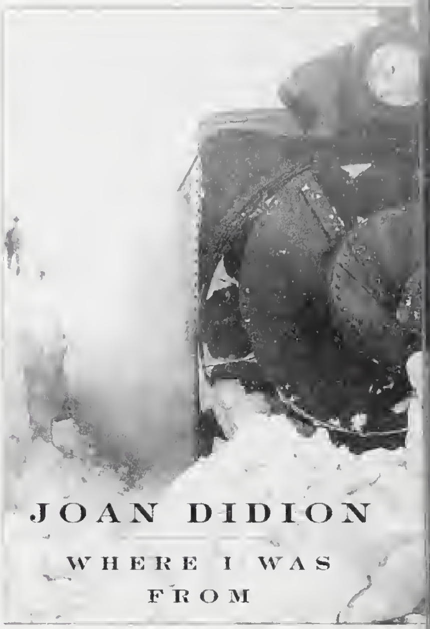
By Joan Didion. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003. 240 pp., $23, cloth.)

REVIEWED BY JEFF LUSTIG, PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

In *Where I Was From,* Joan Didion undertakes the rare task of trying to discover the shape and meaning of her place of origin. She seeks to cast off half-truths and whole myths "to find 'the point' of California." To this end she examines numerous sources and follows a profusion of signposts, from histories to official reports, community visits to local interviews, her own previous *Run River* (1963) to family records and fragments of remembered conversations. The result is less an exercise in geography than in cultural recovery, less the location of a place on the map than on the terrain of social meanings. Her effort is to create, to weave together, a "where" out of these disparate sources and see what it adds up to morally and historically.

The place she discovers is of natural interest to readers of this journal because it is part of California, and her search entails extended conversation with those who thought most deeply and carefully about the state: Josiah Royce, Sarah Royce, Henry George, Frank Norris, and Robinson Jeffers, among others. Her sustaining hunch is that large tracts of her "where" remain for a people who still "likes to be fooled," as Mr. Cedarquist put it in Norris's *The Octopus* long ago. Didion's characteristic brevity of speech and deadpan delivery make it easy to miss the difficulty of what she's attempted. She leads the reader repeatedly and without apparent effort from surface to depth, from the familiar to the unexpected, in a way that links seemingly separate facts and leaves the familiar in an altered light. It is not a flattering light, maybe even a twilight. But because this journey of exploration is important and I believe successful, its results are worth reporting.

Didion begins her account in the Sacramento of her youth, a place distant from the central cities and paved subdivisions of contemporary California. Suffusing and coloring that region for children and adults alike, descending as it were from the Sierra foothills, was the tale of the journey West, the "crossing." It was a story of adventure, resourcefulness and perseverance, and an enchanting tale for Didion, in both of the senses of the term. It was also a myth, she now sees, telling a deeper story about a quest for redemption. Redemption is of course a powerful theme in American history, and a tricky one. The Puritans came to New England searching for it. But their descendents presumed they could force it on Indians and other nations whether they wanted it or not. It was "Redeemer" Democrats during Reconstruction who drove blacks out of southern politics. The trickiness of the idea in the California setting, for Didion, was that it was never clear what the westering settlers wanted to redeem themselves from and to redeem themselves for.



Courtesy Alfred A. Knopf

They left strong clues about the first of these, to be sure. A hidden element of the crossing story as Didion plumbs it consisted of the pioneers' penchant for abandonment. They willingly jettisoned burdens on the trail as the price of the pilgrimage—furniture, family heirlooms, wagons and oxen, sometimes even the halt and the lame. Royce made the same point. And Richard Rodriguez observes that where Mexicans, moving north, saw a world that looked continuous with what they'd left, the Yankees, moving west, imagined each mountain range a knife edge cutting them off from the European past and from history itself. The severing had to be done quickly. On that we have the poignant lesson learned the hard way from young Virginia Reed of the Donner Party (and also noted in James Houston's impresive *Snow Mountain Passage*): to never take no cutoffs and hurry along as fast as you can."

Didion's account suggests that the most costly thing discarded on the ourney, which the pioneers sought o redeem themselves from most horoughly but which they would need later on, was the larger sense of their communities and of duties o others, the understanding that life on the Pacific would still require more than separate individuals pursuing their selfish ends. ("The men had left their responsibilities elsewhere," is how Royce put it.) "They ended to accommodate any means n pursuit of an uncertain end," Joan Didion explains about her women forebears who made the trek. But 'They tended to avoid dwelling on ust what that end might imply." That was true for the men too, though land was at the heart of what they sought. It was the bait. Land, as many have written, was the great feature in the California character. Didion frequently cites Henry George's prescient article "What the Railroad Will Bring Us" (1868) and reports that in a more literate age it was assigned reading for California students. George wrote elsewhere on the beneficent impact of the vast public domain on pioneer character.

But Didion parts ways with George and Norris and the prevailing story in her view of what the land meant for the settlers. Her research indicates that those early farmers and ranchers were already a species of rural businessman. They already had their eyes fixed on the main chance as well as their crops. They already looked at the land as property and perceived the vast commons as a storehouse of commodities and investments. That our farmland has traditionally been mined and not cultivated, as Carey McWilliams later observed, follows naturally from that perspective. By the 1950s a domain that had once been vast and continuous was being divided and subdivided, drawn and quartered, "developed" in the lexicon of the times. (The word "development," as Douglas Lummis defines it and Didion would agree, "tells you that things are getting better when you can see with your own eyes that they are getting worse.") Didion's account thus suggests that the great feature in the California character was not really land at all, but real estate. It is a seminal suggestion. Real estate in its developmental permutations and dependence on changing land values does seem the enterprise that more than any other has set the shape and feel of life in the state. What textile mills were to nineteenth-century England or coal to Pennsylvania, real estate has been to California.

In the accepted story of state life, the success of its land barons, developers, and major industrialists was due to their skill and pluck. Didion herself long believed this. But she doesn't any longer. Her studies have revealed that the success of those figures was dependent from the start, rather, on government handouts. If highway subsidies and defense contracts greased the skids for postwar developers, rights-of-way and adjacent timber and mineral rights did the same for the early railroadmen, and immense water subsidies irrigated agribusiness's profits. California's business leaders have drunk deep at the public trough. While praising markets, they have never hesitated to mine the state too for special advantages.

What all this means regarding the "what for" of redemption isn't pretty. Very few settlers on the land were ever able to become independent yeoman or masters of their fates. As epitomized by the inhabitants of California's postwar subdivisions, they became temporary beneficiaries instead of developers' and industrialists' plans, bit players in others' scripts. On this Joan Didion turns, in her most sociologically insightful chapters, to the southern California community of Lakewood and interviews she conducted with its inhabitants. Launched in the early 1950s with lots for 17,500 houses to meet the dual manpower needs of defense contractors and shopping mall designers, Lakewood eventually became home to "an artificial ownership class" which, riding the crest of the defense economy, thought the prosperity would never end.

At age 13, Didion tells us, she read *Middletown* and *Middletown in Transition* by Robert Staught Lynd and Helen M. Lynd and immediately asked her mother what class they belonged to. The response was immediate: "It's not a word we use," her mother replied. "It's not the way we think." (Classes too were apparently supposed to have been left on the trail.) It wasn't the way people in the Lakewoods of the state thought either. Didion sees that such places were, in fact, "California's mill towns, breeder towns for the boom." They were the towns "that proved Marx wrong"—but in an intriguing way. They "managed to increase the proletariat and simultaneously, by calling it middle class, to co-opt it."

Joan Didion is not a person we would normally think of to turn to for class analysis or commentary on the proletariat. In what will undoubtedly become a lasting piece of social analysis, she skillfully anatomizes the sociology and psychology of the resulting paradox. On the one hand, large divisions of power and status remained, along with massive private diversions of public policy. As the tide ran out and defense dollars dried up in the 1990s, Didion traces the responses of the luckless residents of California's accidental settlements with a respect for their lives and an eye for detail that does honor to the memory of the Lynds and recent researches of the Public Policy Institute of California. On the other hand, the working class revealed by the falling tide does turn out to be peculiarly impervious to class consciousness. A gang, the Spur Posse, appears among its children, bullying, bombing, and triggering charges of rape, then seeking to mine a new resource—their disreputability—for profit on a talk show. The parents endlessly defend their kids even as the last aircraft plant, the main pillar of the community, closes. Didion perceives that "This [closure] was what people in Lakewood were talking about when they talked about the Spur Posse."

Some have questioned Didion's silence on race. In a state now 32 percent Hispanic, 7 percent black and 11 percent Asian, that seemed to them anomalous. But the silence follows from Didion's project. Her "where" during the 1930s and 1940s was overwhelmingly a white world. And the criticism is not, in any case, entirely accurate. If she says little about different racial groups, Didion is nevertheless discerning and accurate about a major source of racism. She records how southern Californians greeted the Rodney King riots. Then she reports on the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs at the time due to downsizing in the state, concluding in a formulation paralleling the one above: "This is what people in Los Angeles were talking about when they talked about the 1992 riot." Pain travels, she tells us by both statements. The place it hurts may not be the place the injury occurred.

Some may have wanted more on the state's minorities. Others may dispute her rendering of a particular work. (The ultimate malefactor in *The Octopus* for me has never been "an indifferent nature.") Still others may regret that a native daughter now writes home from a New York high-rise. Didion makes it clear that she has never abandoned California, however. Her aim is accurate, and her scope is extraordinary, embracing not only the topics I've noted bu a host of others: California's current preference for funding prisons rather than schools, the character of those prisons, the historically high rates of people "put away" for eccentric behavior (so much for our reputed openness), and our shameful record for 79 percent of the nation's sterilizations by 1920 for "feeble-mindedness."

Although Didion refrains from preaching, it's clear that she wants to tell us something about ourselves and the consequences of our continuing desire "to be fooled." She notes that every generation of Californians reassured itself that the place was pure when they got here and was only subsequently defiled and spoiled by newcomers. (Royce made the same point about the pre-'49ers' view of the '49-ers.) But after reading this slim volume one cannot help but become aware of the mote in our own eye, the germs of disappointment we carry in our own continued self-deceptions. One cannot also help but realize, as Royce and George and McWilliams tried to persuade us, that once you jettison community and let the land, trees, and water be turned over to private profiteers, you leave very few futures open for yourself. With this book and after a distinguished literary career Didion establishes herself among these estimable commentators, moving from observations about the state to becoming an integral part of it, and creating a rich ore-bearing vein in the "where" future Californians will be from.

apanese Pride, American Prejudice: Modifying The Exclusion Clause Of The 1924 Immigration Act

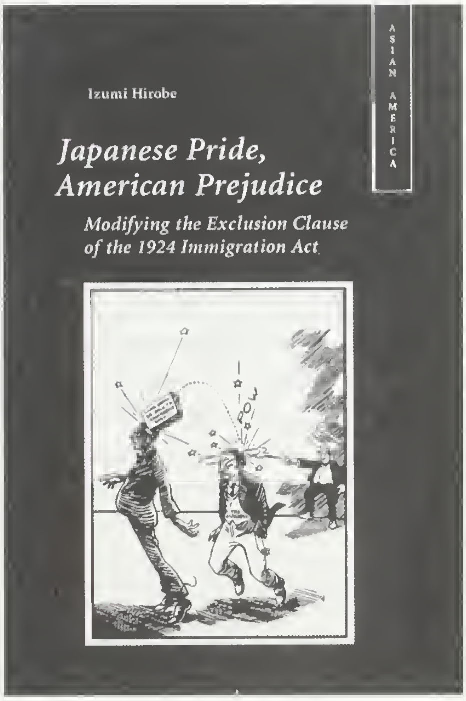
By Izumi Hirobe. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001, 327 pp., $49.50.)

REVIEWED BY NICHOLAS EVAN SARANTAKES, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY, COMMERCE, AND AUTHOR OF "KEYSTONE: AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF OKINAWA AND U.S.-JAPANESE RELATIONS"

In *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice,* Izumi Hirobe has written an impressive study of U.S.-Japanese relations during the interwar period. A basic premise of this book is that domestic debate, interest, and influence on foreign policy took place in local forums as well as those on a national scale. Like Fredrik Logevall's *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalating of the War in Vietnam* (1999), James C. Schneider's *Should America Go to War? The Debate over Foreign Policy in Chicago, 1939-1941* (1989), or this reviewer's work on Senator Lyndon Johnson, this study suggests that the local and regional investigations should be added to the standard (biographical, national, and international) levels of inquiry in diplomatic history.

The main focus of the book is the effort to revise the Japanese exclusion clause of the 1924 Immigration Act. This legislation has been the subject of numerous studies, but the attempts at modification have seen little scholarly inquiry. Hirobe is clearly telling a story that few have examined. The thesis of the book is "that the non-official sector played a significant role in defusing U.S.-Japanese tensions during the critical period following 1924 by suggesting an alternative peaceful vision of U.S.-Japanese relations." The author has done an amazing amount of research on both sides of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Every type of document from the official records of the Japanese Foreign Ministry and State Department to oral histories, local American and Japanese newspapers, and pamphlets and leaflets appear in the notes and bibliography. As a result, Hirobe shows a subtle understanding of politics in the United States during the interwar period.

The main actors in a campaign to change the law were missionary and business leaders with an interest in U.S.-Japanese relations. Business and religious organizations fought a series of battles up and down the West Coast in an effort to modify the act. Although these groups failed, their effort was a major endeavor and consumed a good deal of public attention and energy. While the advocates of the status quo had strong voices in the U.S. Congress, the author shows that those favoring revision spoke for national constit-uencies. In the end, it was internal differences, personal feuds, and an inability to speak with one voice that thwarted the cause of modification. As a result, Hirobe has integrated a study of a diplomatic history not only into the English-language historiography of Japan, but also those of race, California, Oregon, Washington, religion, and business.



Izumi Hirobe

Japanese Pride, American Prejudice

Modifying the Exclusion Clause of the 1924 Immigration Act

ASIAN AMERICA

Courtesy Stanford University Press

BOOK REVIEWS

Voting At The Political Fault Line: California's Experiment With The Blanket Primary

Edited by Bruce E. Cain and Elisabeth R. Gerber. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002, 384 pp., $22.50 paper, $55 cloth.)

REVIEWED BY EUGENE C. LEE, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE EMERITUS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY, AND AUTHOR OF "CALIFORNIA VOTES."

In March 1996, Californians voted in favor of the initiative Proposition 198, which established a "blanket primary" as the method of nominating candidates for partisan state and national office. This short-lived experiment, which was in effect during the primary elections of 1998 and 2000, allowed votes to cross party lines in selecting candidates, regardless of the voter's party affiliation. This prefaced the state's existing "closed primary," in which only voters registered with a political party could participate in that party's primary election, with an election open to all voters, including independents, regardless of their registration.

Taking advantage of what the editors term "a fortuitous natural experiment," this volume analyzes in a series of separately authored chapters the ramifications of the dramatic change in the political landscape, a gold-mine for political scientists interested in testing how changes in electoral rules can change behavior and outcomes. The emphasis is on the June 1998 primary election. The writers are political scientists interested in electoral politics, several of whom served as expert witnesses in the judicial proceedings that followed the passage of the initiative.

An important theme of the book, analyzed by several of the writers, is the question of "crossover voting" —to what extent and under what circumstances did voters take advantage of the new procedure and cast a ballot for a candidate in the opposite party? Distinctions are drawn and discussed in detail between "sincere" and "strategic" crossovers. The former involve voters who genuinely prefer the candidate in the opposite party. In contrast, "strategic" voting involves voting for a candidate who is not the voter's most preferred choice; several types of such behavior—ranging from "benign" to "sabotage"—are described and dissected.

Whatever the merits and defects of the blanket primary, the U.S. Supreme Court put the question to rest. In a case brought primarily by the two major party organizations, the court ruled in 2000 that the California law was a "severe and unnecessary" burden on the political parties' protected freedom of association. The court's reasoning is the subject of a separate chapter, which ably addresses the question, "Who speaks for and constitutes the party": the party-in-the-electorate, the party-in-the-legislature, or the professional party organizations and governing bodies? In the case of the blanket primary, the party organization was the winner, regardless of the fact that a majority of voters in two separate elections favored the blanket primary.

How candidates are nominated for partisan office remains a critical issue. The editors conclude: "In the end, California's experiment with the blanket primary yielded a few empirical surprises, but demonstrated nonetheless that changing the rules does seem to change the incentives of voters and candidates. . . . It changes the winners and losers, confers some improvements and some losses, and raises fundamentally political issues. This guarantees that although California's recent blanket experiment is over, there will be other experiments in the future." Indeed there will be, and other court tests as well.

Mi Raza Primero! Nationalism, Identity, And Insurgency In The Chicano Movement In Los Angeles, 1966–1978

By Ernesto Chávez. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 166 pp., $18.95 paper)

REVIEWED BY PABLO-RAÚL ARREOLA, ASSOCIATE DEAN, COLLEGE OF ARTS, LETTERS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, HAYWARD.

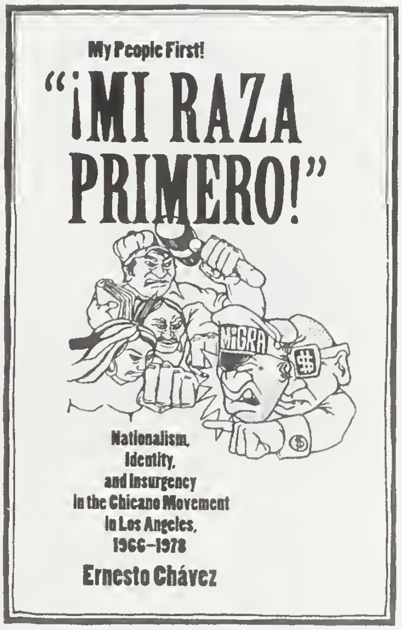
The Chicano Movement, that temblor that shook Los Angeles's Eastside in the late 1960s, was hardly monolithic. Composed of various subgroups of divergent political underpinnings, the Movimiento had its "reds" and its moderates as well as its religious and "mystical" adherents. In *Mi Raza Primero!*, Ernesto Chávez traces the fortunes of the Chicano Movement's "Left Wing," which dominated center stage in Los Angeles between 1966 and 1978. What Chávez finds is that "radical" elements, most notably the Brown Berets, the La Raza Unida Party, the Chicano Moratorium Committee, and CASA (Centro de Acción Social Autónomo), had given the movement a decidedly "leftist" tenor through the use of a complex and often contradictory language of revolution, nationalism, and identity. Their message, as Chávez deftly shows, proved out of step with the interests of the community. Thus, when the call was made to take to the streets, few responded, particularly as local and federal authorities closed in to suppress the movement.

A relatively slim volume (120 pages of text), *Mi Raza Primero!* begins with the "reformist" experiments of the 1950s. The failure of these "mainstream" groups to improve the human condition in the community led to radicalism of the next generation. By 1965, young leftists, outraged by persistent misery in the barrio and emboldened by the anti-Vietnam War fervent, were envisioning a new social order rooted in such contradictory ideas as Chicano nationalism and Marxism-Leninism. Here, Chávez offers a sympathetic but detached analysis of the trajectory of the Chicano Left, from the coffeehouse origins of the Brown Berets to CASA's transformation from a community service organization into a radical group promoting mass socialist revolution.

While the movement enjoyed support in the community, the Left failed to incite a general insurgency. Chávez tells us why. Although they were articulate and outspoken, Chicano leaders failed to communicate their ideas effectively. As students of nationalism agree, effective communication at all levels is essential for building a nation-state or even defining a viable "we-group." Communication was a problem at the most basic level; leaders clashed over strategies and tactics, over philosophy, and over the very meaning of Chicano identity and culture. Amidst the bickering, they failed to grasp the pressing needs of the community. Clearly, the Left had opted for a top-down approach to political action, a strategy that hobbled numerous movements in the 1960s. It is not surprising, then, that their quixotic message fell on deaf ears. Thus, the door may have opened to "moderates" and other groups vying to win the hearts and minds of the community.

Unable to promote a viable agenda, the Chicano Left confronted other obstacles: petty conflicts, machismo (which potentially marginalized 50 percent of its rank and file), lack of funds, and constant infiltration and harassment by the FBI and local police. According to Chávez, these problems eventually took their toll, hastening the movement's demise after 1975.

Why, we wonder, did the Chicano Left err so badly? Chávez tells us how the Left attempted to foment revolution, but we come away with little about what really motivated the radicals and their choice of tactics. Love of community and desire for social justice are only part of the picture. One can perhaps make a case for a prosopographic analysis of the Left-wing elite. Insights into their backgrounds as a group—class, education, family disposition, political tendencies and training, religious affinities, connection to Mexico, fluency in Spanish—might broaden our understanding of their abilities and motives as organizers. Chávez has, nevertheless, pointed the way. *Mi Raza Primero!* is an admirable work that forces us to think long and hard about what some scholars have called the Chicano's "radical moment."


My People First!
"¡MI RAZA PRIMERO!"
MIGRA
Nationalism, Identity, and Insurgency in the Chicano Movement in Los Angeles, 1966–1978
Ernesto Chávez

BOOK REVIEWS

RUSH FOR RICHES: GOLD FEVER AND THE MAKING OF CALIFORNIA

By J. S. Holliday. (Oakland Museum of California and University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1999. 355 pp., $34.95, paper)

RICHES FOR ALL: THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH AND THE WORLD

Ed. by Kenneth N. Owens. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000, 328 pp., $27.95 paper.)

AMERICAN ALCHEMY: THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH AND MIDDLE-CLASS CULTURE. CULTURAL STUDIES OF THE UNITED STATES

By Brian Roberts. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000, 328 pp., $19.95)

REVIEWED BY DOUGLAS E. KYLE, EMERITUS INSTRUCTOR IN HISTORY AT MERRITT COLLEGE AND AUTHOR OF "HISTORIC SPOTS IN CALIFORNIA"

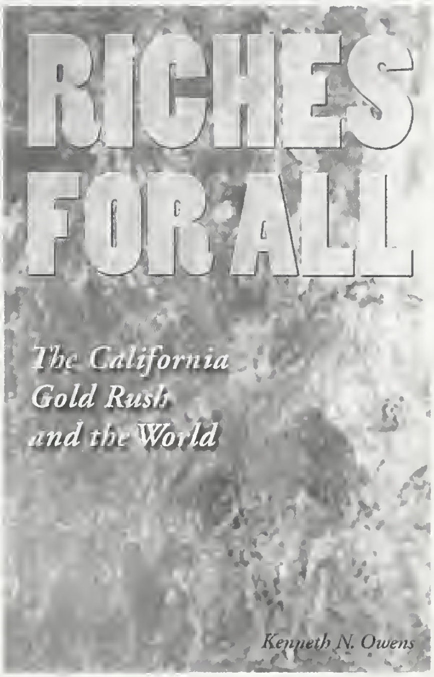
The sesquicentennial of the California gold rush was the occasion for J. S. Holliday's splendid account of discovery, opportunism, adventure, exploitation, and transformation. Handsomely presented, the oversize volume has excellent illustrations, and many maps that are both informative and beautiful. Holliday incorporates details that stick in the reader's memory: In 1846, there was not enough population to support one commercial dairy in cattle-raising Alta California. In 1852, by contrast, the overwhelmed postmaster of San Francisco had to employ clerks who understood Chinese, Russian, French, Spanish, Italian, and German. By the 1880s, the Yuba River was so full of detritus from hydraulic mines farther upstream that its bed was a full thirty feet above what it had been in 1850, with disastrous consequences for the adjacent countryside.

The Gold Rush came at a moment when far-reaching changes in political, social, and economic worlds freed many men to take the risky trip far from their homelands. One point that Holliday illustrates well is the difficulty of the journey by land or by sea—there is even pictured an "aerial locomotive" that got into the advertising pages but never of course was built. There was real danger from unknown reefs and shoals, fever crossing the isthmus of Panama, or cholera on the overland trail. As the easy-to-find placer gold of the streambeds became scarcer, men had to build new machines and systems to penetrate the Mother Lode. The climax of the book is the desperate battle in the 1870s and 1880s between the mining interests who used existing laws to justify their dumping of waste into the streams and the farmers who saw their lands covered with "slickens," mud and debris that hardened in the summer to a cement-like layer overlying the fertile land now beneath it. The judgment ending most hydraulic mining in California by Justice Sawyer of the Ninth U.S. District Court in San Francisco (1884) was an early victory in ecological activism.

One theme that also resonates through this account is the slow growth of governing institutions. Captain Richard Mason, the first military governor of California under the stars and stripes, was fully aware that he lacked the resources and personnel to enforce law and order, particularly in the matter of who actually owned the gold in California. There was no federal or state law regulating these matters, which made it easier for newcomers to seize property that was unclaimed and work it for themselves. Miners often made their own law, and the burgeoning city of San Francisco accepted vigilante rule at least twice in the 1850s. In 1857, William Tecumseh Sherman, then a San Francisco banker, wrote to St. Louis business partners, "I see no signs of moral reform in California, though some vigilantes see it sticking out in every direction. My opinion is, the very nature of the country begets speculation, extravagance, failures, and rascality. Nobody feels a fixed interest here, and all are ready to bolt soon as a good chance offers. Everything is change, everything is gambling." *Rush for Riches* is a brilliant successor to Holliday's previous narrative, *The World Rushed In.*

Riches for All: The California Gold Rush and the World is a collection of articles mostly drawn from the Gold ush sesquicentennial lectures pre- ented in 1998 and 1999 in Sacramento. common theme is how the Gold ush and the experience of California ransformed values and perceptions f many different people. Kenneth wens, in “Gold-Rich Saints,” notes ow the newly formed Mormon ommunities in California and Salt ake prospered because of their ork ethic and commercial abilities. n “Disorder, Crime, and Punishment n the California Gold Rush,” Martin idge writes on the efforts of “social- acculturated men who sought ealth” to create an efficient and rosperous community in a place here there was little effective gov- rnment and few civil servants to arry it out. Although the society of alifornia in the 1850s was over- helmingly masculine, Susan L. ohnson, in “The Last Fandango: Vomen, Work, and the End of the old Rush” documents interesting ccounts of women who achieved inancial success (while still labor- ng under sexist laws) in the south- rn mines. Opportunities opened for nany non-American emigrants, as et forth by Malcolm J. Rohrbough, ‘We Will Make Our Fortunes—No oubt of It’: The World-Wide Rush o California.” As a result, “within a ew short years, James W. Marshall’s iscovery of January 24, 1848, made alifornia into the most cosmopoli- an place in the world.”

o complex a tale as that of the Gold ush has other sides to it, brought ut by several articles. In “Clouded egacy: California Indians and the Gold Rush,” Albert L. Hurtado documents the devastation visited upon the native tribes. American rule, he notes, also brought the introduction of traditional American attitudes toward Indians—that they were hostile, treacherous, and an impediment to progress and civilization. Michael J. Gonzalez, in “‘My Brother’s Keeper’: Mexicans and the Hunt for Prosperity in California, 1848-2000,” notes the persistent conflict between “Anglo-Americans” and the various Spanish-speaking communities, often to the detriment of the latter. Free-soil California was not altogether a haven for black Americans, as Shirley Ann Wilkson Moore points out in her essay “‘Do You Think I’ll Lug Trunks?’: African Americans in Gold Rush California.” Moore notes that “the state constitution [of 1850] and other legislation placed such restrictions on the lives of people of color that freedom in the Golden State became a precarious proposition.” Perhaps the most isolated of all the peoples of California were the Chinese, who created for themselves working communities within the broader context of California society. Sylvia Sun Minnick’s “Never Far From Home: Being Chinese in the California Gold Rush” emphasizes this sense of community and of collective responsibility as one strong element keeping the Chinese together, often in the face of outright hostility. Two articles deal with gold rushes in other parts of the Pacific basin: Australia, New Zealand, British Columbia, and the Klondike.



Courtesy University of Nebraska Press

American Alchemy
The California Gold Rush and Middle-Class Culture
BRIAN ROBERTS

Courtesy University of North Carolina Press

BOOK REVIEWS

Brian Roberts, a contributor to *Riches For All*, is the author of *American Alchemy: The California Gold Rush and Middle-Class Culture*. Much of his information comes from letters exchanged between families back home in Michigan or Massachusetts and their separated son, husband, or cousin in far-off California. The folks at home were anxious about the fate of their loved one, an anxiety shaped in part by uncertainty. Roberts skillfully mines these papers and comes up with marvelous excerpts. Although her husband would eventually return, one miner's wife's "nervous constitution could not endure" the thought "that while I am writing these lines to you your body may be mouldering back to its mother's dust from whence it came." Another wife tells her husband, who is determined to seek his fortune even though it meant leaving his wife with young children: "We were married to live together . . . under these circumstances you have no right to go where I cannot, and if you do, you need never return for I shall look upon you as dead." It must have been upsetting for another to read in her husband's latest account from the gold fields that "I am surrounded by a very profane wicked Company. Their whole conversations is about their Jurney through Mexico or horses & vile & filthy & obscene conversations half & half with Oaths & curses." We can't know what prompted one Argonaut to write home that "there is a good deal of sin [and] wickedness going on here. Stealing, lying, Swearing, Drinking, Gambling, murdering. There is a great deal of gambling carried on here. Almost every public House is a place for Gambling. Men make [or?] lose thousands in a night—if they lose all, go the next day [and] dig more." A legend was in the making that California was the antithesis of respectable moral life as championed in the communities of the east and midwest. Returning home to Massachusetts after five years in California, one gold-seeker who did not make his fortune missed the freedoms he had left: "In the east the Yankee was walled about by forms, creeds, and conventions; it is an easy matter to make a Yankee into a Californian, but no easy matter to change him back again."

Historians of the Gold Rush are fortunate to work in a field where there is an abundance of correspondence. Writers long dead come to life as the Gold Rush experience is viewed with wonder, apprehension, and sometimes exhilaration. In each of these books the authors have made excellent use of sources.

The Gold And Silver Of Spanish America, C. 1572-1648

By Engel Sluiter. (Berkeley: Bancroft Library, 1998, 188 pp., $50 cloth).

Guide To The Manuscripts Concerning Baja California

By Rose Marie Beebe and Robert Senkewicz. (Berkeley: Bancroft Library, 2002, 587 pp., $50 cloth).

Esteban Jose Martinez: His Voyage In 1779 To Supply Alta California

Edited and translated by Vivian Fisher. (Berkeley: Bancroft Library, 2002, 269 pp., $75 cloth).

REVIEWED BY DONALD C. CUTTER, RETIRED PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, AUTHOR OF "MALASPINA IN CALIFORNIA AND CALIFORNIA IN 1792."

Professor Engel Sluiter spent many years after retirement from the University of California, Berkeley, in gathering, collating, and giving order to statistics concerning a life-long interest. Some younger colleagues added statistical documentary evidence that permitted Sluiter's estimates of gold and silver production to rest on an improved footing. However, this never reached the point where everybody was satisfied, not even Sluiter. There will probably never be another major statistical attempt nor even a significant alteration. This is not a book to be read and enjoyed, but rather one when arefully perused permits categorical tatements concerning sixteenth- and eventeenth-century precious metal roduction, allowing from such study e Spanish crown's mineral income o rest on better evidence.

atisfactory review of a comprehensive sting of manuscripts is impossible. rom the detailed listing by Santa lara professors Beebe (Spanish) and enkewicz (History), this reviewer was urprised by the enormity of holdings oncerning Baja California possessed y Bancroft Library. This book is a bor of love, a tour de force, a once-n-a-lifetime effort. The editors are o be congratulated for preparing a ool of great value for both special-zed scholars and those with a more eneral interest in the history of a reatly neglected nearby area.

Translation is a perilous exercise, an example being this interesting book concerning Esteban José Martínez. The translator-editor was obviously conversant with contemporary documentation, knew Hispanic California well, and was consistent in her treatment. One of her advisors and colleagues knew well the maritime personalities of the period. But some errors seem to have resulted from the author's death before she could polish the manuscript and corrections by unspecialized editors. The idea, for example, that Juan Pérez was also known as Juan José Pérez Hernández only resurrects earlier misconceptions. In California he was always called Juan Pérez and was listed as Juan Antonio Pérez at the pilotage school that he earlier attended. Sergeant Juan José Pérez Hernández, almost a contemporary, was adjutant to Governor Roméu. It is impossible that both a regional army sergeant and a leading maritime figure would have had identical names.

Despite these errors, this diary allows readers an opportunity to sail to the newly founded Spanish colony, visit the principal ports, unload the yearly supplies coming from San Blas in Mexico, and catch glimpses of frontier life as seen through the eyes of an Andalusian naval officer. Much can be learned about the last great push northward of Spain's overseas empire and particularly about the presidio and the mission as institutions supported by the Spanish navy from its new Pacific base west of Guadalajara.

"An exceptional guide for curious, history-conscious travellers."
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CHECKLIST

Compiled Charles N. Johnson

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Barrett, Jim. *Ma Duncan.* Raleigh, NC: Ivy House Publishing Group, 2004. $23.95 (paper), plus $4.75 postage and handling, $1.00 for each additional copy. Elizabeth Ann "Ma" Duncan, convicted of the murder of her pregnant daughter-in-law, was the last woman to be executed in California.
ISBN: 1-57197-384-2.
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Barstow, Diantha L. *The Colemans of California: A Family History Focusing on the Lives of John Crisp Coleman, Edward Coleman, and Persis Sibley Coleman.* Savannah, GA: D.L. Barstow, 2003. $40.00 (cloth), includes shipping and handling.
ISBN: 0-9727-3720-0.
Order from: Diantha L. Barstow; 1 Log Landing Road; Savannah, GA 31411-3040.

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Order from: Berkeley Hills Books; Post Office Box 9877; Berkeley, CA 94709.

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ISBN: 0-7385-2098-5.
Order from: Arcadia Publishing; 3047 N. Lincoln Ave., Ste. 410; Chicago, IL 60657, or by calling 1-888-313-2665.

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Dennis, Jan. *Manhattan Beach Police Department.* Chicago, IL: Arcadia Publishing, 2003. $19.95 (paper)
ISBN: 0-7385-2089-6.
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Fagin, Brian. *Before California: An Archaeologist Looks at Our Earliest Inhabitants.* Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003. $24.95 (cloth) "First comprehensive look at the history of the Golden State prior to the arrival of European settlers."
ISBN: 0-7425-2794-8.
Order from: AltaMira Press; 15200 NBN; Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214.

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ISBN: 0-9631618-5-7.
Order from: High-grove Press; Post Office Box 52888; Riverside, CA 92517.

Harter, Robert D., ed. *Wagon Tracks: George Harter's 1864 Journey to California.* Tucson, AZ: Patrice Press, 2003. $20.95 (paper) $4.95 shipping and handling.
Order from: The Patrice Press; Post Office Box 85639; Tucson, AZ 85754-5639.

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ISBN:1-5881-0414-1.
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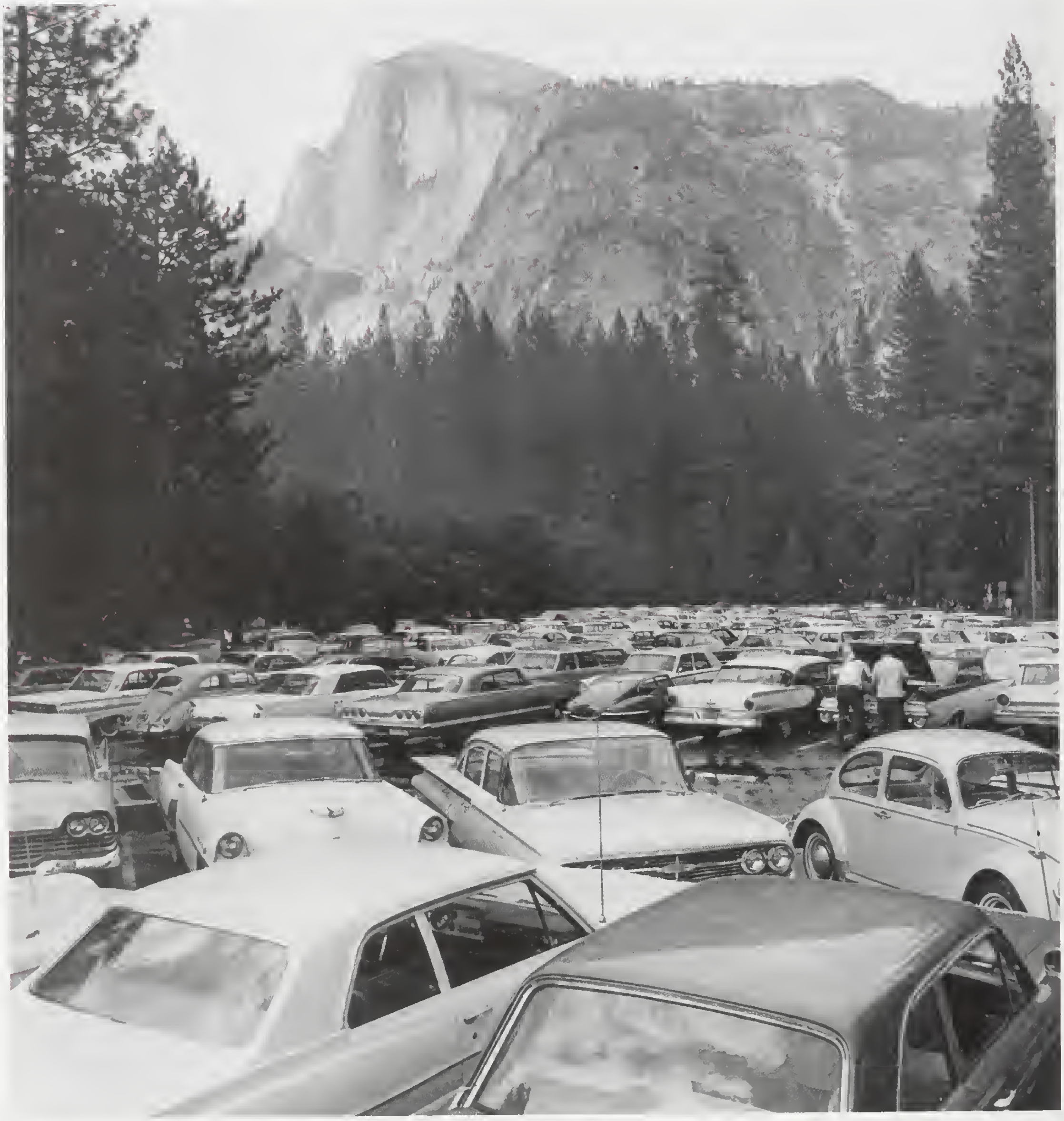

PAVE IT AND PAINT IT GREEN, YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, MID-1960s

Photographer Rondal Partridge captured a less-than-idyllic view of California's wilderness when he traveled to Yosemite National Park to work on a film for San Francisco public television station KQED. "I went to Yosemite with a producer," Partridge notes. "All he saw was falling water, tall cliffs, and happy people. He wanted to do a story on how Yosemite was discovered. I saw congestion, destruction, erosion. I got up on the top of the car and took the shot and was blasted by a bullhorn from a ranger. He demanded I get off the car. I convinced his supervisor that I had obtained permission to photograph, and that I could shoot from wherever I wanted."

The son of well-known photographer Imogen Cunningham, Rondal Partridge began his career as an assistant to Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange and captured the waning days of the Great Depression working for the National Youth Administration. Throughout his career he contributed photographs to Look, Life, *and* Collier's Magazine. *The California Historical Society recently exhibited a retrospective of his work and published* The Quizzical Eye: The Photography of Rondal Partridge *by Elizabeth Partridge and Sally Stein.*

Ernest Thayer &

"Casey at the Bat,"

Joe DiMaggio

Ted Williams

Jackie Robinson

Sparky Anderson

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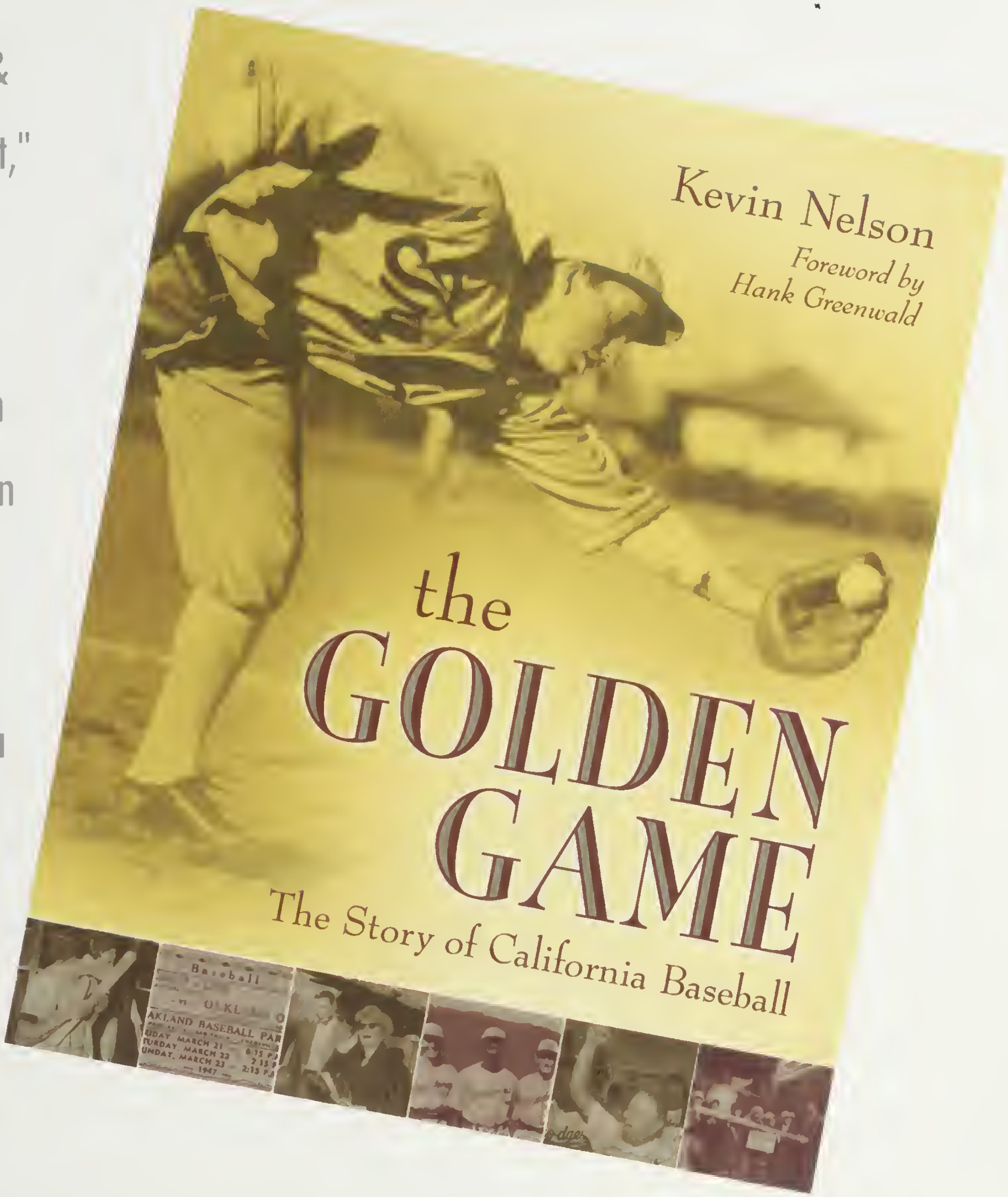

aseball and the Gold Rush, Ernest Thayer and "Casey at the Bat;" baseball crook Hal Chase, Joe DiMaggio, Ted Williams, Jackie obinson and integration, crusty Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth and Hollywood baseball movies, Satchel Paige versus Dizzy Dean, Kenichi enimura and the Japanese American experience, Sparky Anderson, Gene Autry, Willie Mays, Tommy Lasorda, and the rise of the baby oom generation of players—all of these people and stories are part of the incredible saga of California baseball and how it has aped the national pastime.

evin Nelson, author of over a dozen books on sports, presents in words and pictures 150 years of baseball history, from sandlot ball the 1850s to the coming of the Dodgers, Giants, Angels, Athletics, and Padres. Here is a stirring, colorfully written narrative about e state that is the birthplace and proving ground for more major leaguers than any other.

ith more than 150 photographs of vintage and modern ballplayers and scenes, *The Golden Game* is not only a richly illustrated and vely read, but also a well-researched reference work that will delight baseball fans and anyone who loves a good story.

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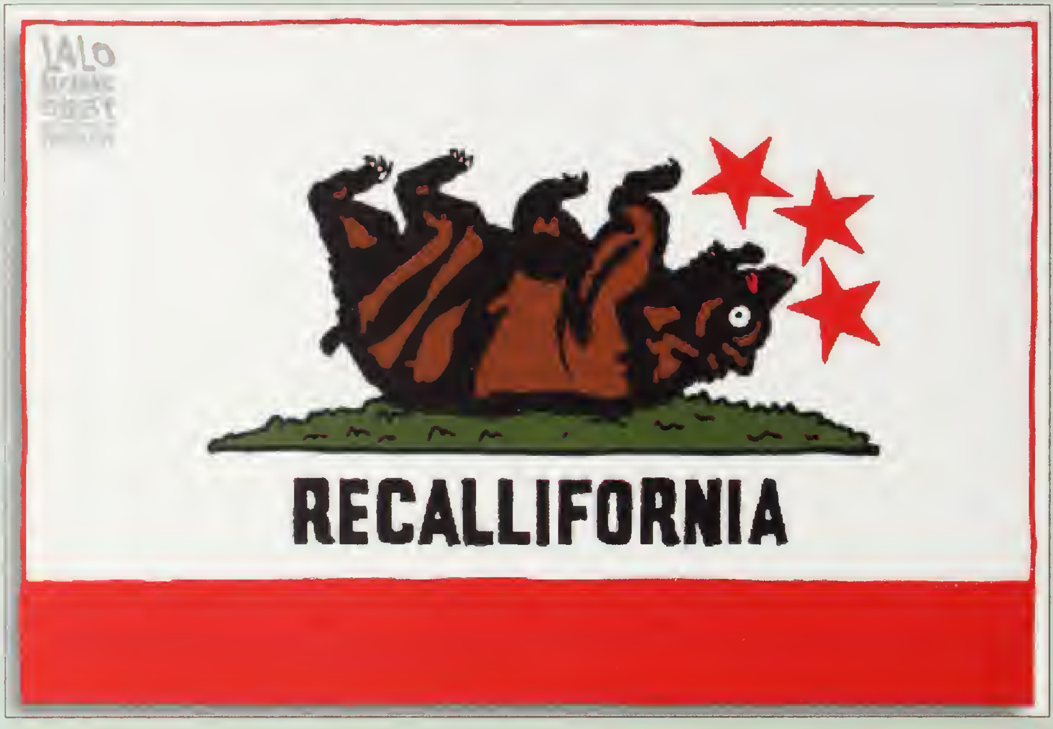
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ON THE COVER:
Alto saxophonist Lester Young (top center) jams with Count Basie (on piano, lower right) and other musicians in January 1943. The saxophonist was the best-known member of the influential Young family, which settled in Los Angeles in the early 1930s. The Youngs brought their talents not only to the city's vibrant Central Avenue jazz scene but, through touring ensembles and Hollywood connections, audiences around the world.
GETTY IMAGES.

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A quarterly journal published by CHS since 1922, *California History* features articles by leading scholars and writers focusing on the heritage of California and the West from pre-Columbian to modern times. Illustrated articles, pictorial essays, and book reviews examine the ongoing dialogue between the past and the present. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

FROM THE EDITOR

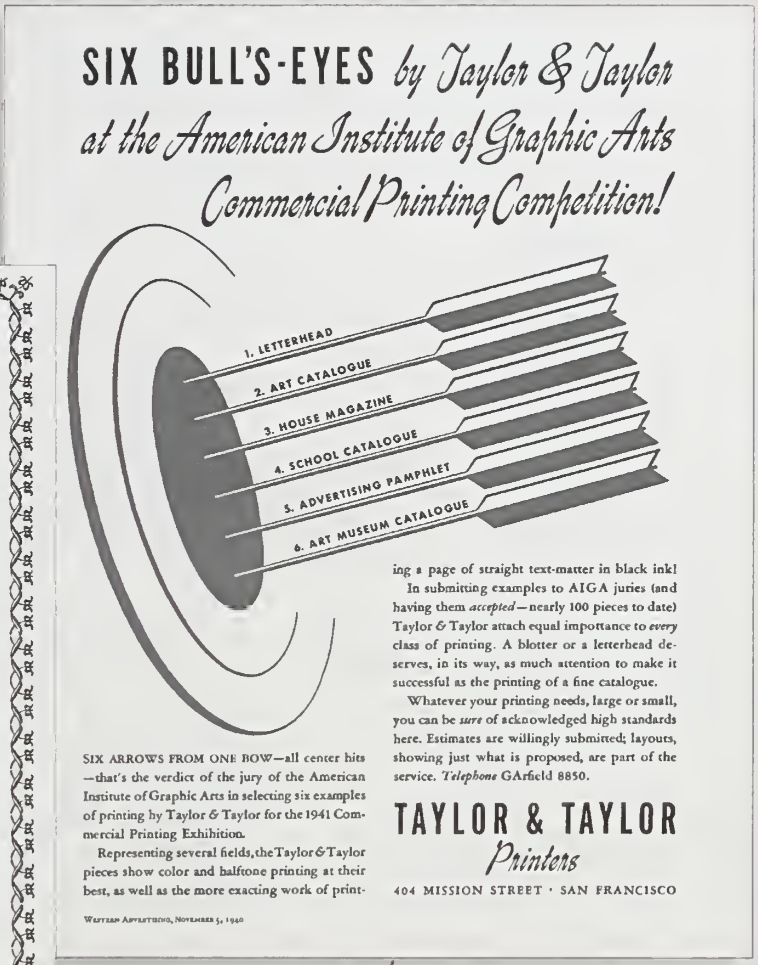
As a historian, I am not comfortable with predictions for the future. You see, the past overflows with variety, and there are too many variables now to imagine certainties to come. But I'm willing to stick my neck out about disasters: We have not seen the end of them.

Can we prevent disasters? With all of our engineering and technological advances, can we not apply a preventive fix on identified causes, or at least, can we mitigate the inevitable?

History is instructive, providing case examples. With public health issues, vaccines and sanitation avert some disasters. But of course new diseases rear their ugly heads, and other preventable health hazards—like too much fast food—always happen, even when we know better. In California, blessed in so many ways, dramatic environmental hazards are endemic. Maybe not hurricanes; and damage-causing tsunamis hit us only about every eighteen years; but the state frequently sustains wildfires, mudslides, earthquakes, and even tornadoes. California endures, but there are enormous costs in property damage, and much worse, in human life. Avoidance is impossible; ameliorative measures do some good, and mitigation activities may prevent emergencies or lessen damage.

In 1928, the St. Francis Dam in Southern California broke, and it ranks among the very worst dam and flood disasters in the nation's history. According to FEMA's National Dam Safety Program, there are about eighty thousand dams in this country, each providing numerous benefits and risks. Today a complicated web of governmental and private agencies is dedicated to dam safety. Seventy-six years ago, nothing like that existed, but the magnitude of St. Francis prompted California to enact dam safety legislation that provided a model for other states. As in much happier pursuits, California also led the nation in disaster and in mitigation policy. This issue of *California History* contains extremely important new work entitled "Privilege and Responsibility: William Mulholland and the St. Francis Dam Disaster." The essay investigates, uncovers, and then reveals (for the first time) all the crucial factors behind the greatest civil-engineering disaster in modern U.S. history. We are most pleased to present it here along with a fascinating essay on the roots of jazz and family musical traditions in Los Angeles.

Janet Fireman
Editor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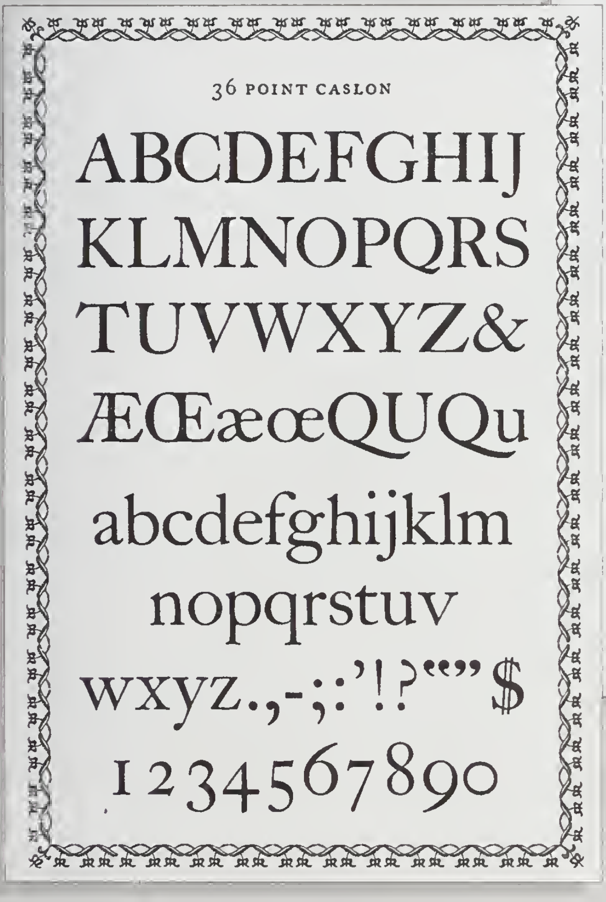

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ABOVE: Taylor & Taylor advertisement in *Western Advertising*, November 5, 1940.

LEFT: Specimen from *Types, Borders and Miscellany of Taylor & Taylor*, (San Francisco: T & T, 1939) which was selected for the American Institute of Graphic Arts' "Fifty Books of the Year."

Fine Printing in California

Taylor & Taylor, founded at the turn of the 19th century, was one of San Francisco's premier printing houses. The firm's archive offers an almost-complete look into the workings of the business, which closed in the 1960s. Records such as work dockets and job files as well as printers' copies of books, pamphlets, periodicals and ephemera document the craft of commercial letterpress printing that has all but vanished with the advent of offset lithography.

The Taylor & Taylor archive makes up part of the California Historical Society's Kemble Collections on Western Printing and Publishing, established through gifts from George L. Harding. The collections are named for Edward Cleveland Kemble, pioneer California printer, publisher, and newspaper historian. The Kemble Collections represent a unique resource for the study of type founding, typesetting machinery, lithography, paper-making, and other facets of printing as an art, science, and, above all, a business.

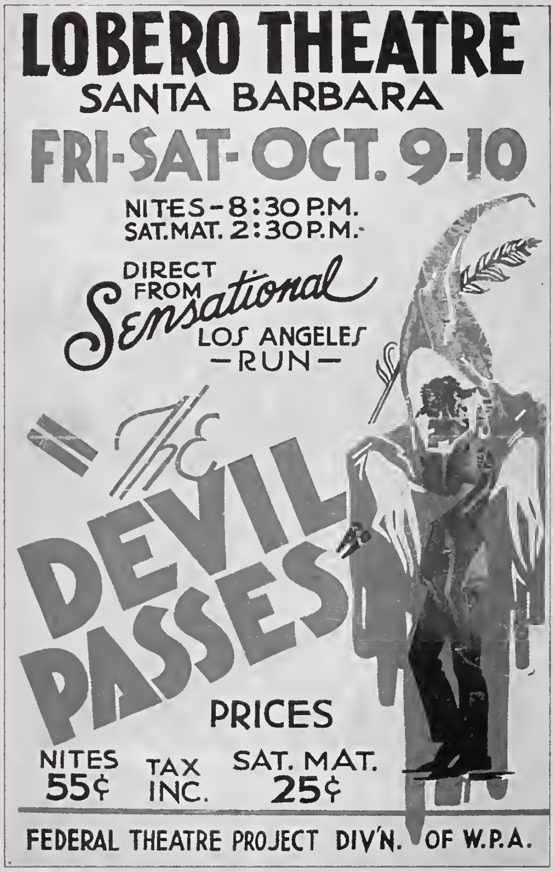
The Kemble Collections, which recently received a bequest from the estates of Elise Eilers Elliott and James Welsh Elliott, are available for researchers in the North Baker Research Library at the Society's headquarters in San Francisco. For current library reading room hours, check the CHS website at www.californiahistoricalsociety.org.

Santa Barbara Noir

By Barbara Tannenbaum

It was summer and my spouse and I were staying at the Four Season Biltmore Santa Barbara. We were traveling with our dog and therefore had to walk her late at night across the exotic palm-lined grounds, through Spanish tiled arcades, and finally down to Butterfly Beach across the road. Behind us the lights in the elegant 1927 Spanish Colonial-styled hotel glowed warm and inviting. Ahead, the beach was shrouded in darkness and fog. Another nighttime stroller seemingly appeared out of nowhere, his outline fuzzy in the coastal mist. A buoy tolled mournfully in the distance.

It was a perfect "noir" moment, or rather what author and historian DJ Waldie calls "noir adjacent." Although picturesque and evocative, nothing bad was going to happen. The stranger, now revealed to be wearing shorts and flip flops, was not going to hurt us. But for a moment, everything looked and felt so Chandleresque. He might have emerged in a trench coat and fedora. And I, not usually out at the beach in the small hours of the night, just might have been carrying some blackmail money. The Biltmore itself, originally designed for southern California's high rollers during the roaring twenties, well, it could have stood in for the mansion of a decadent oil heiress whose best days were behind her.



A poster for the Santa Barbara run of the hit Broadway play The Devil Passes *conveys a suitable sense of noir. Penned by British playwright Benn Wolfe Levy and declared one of the best plays of 1931–32, this Federal Theater Project production played in the Lobero Theater, which has hosted productions in Santa Barbara since 1924.*

Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Such are the pleasures of vacationing in Santa Barbara. Dotted with Andalusian red-tile roofs, sheltered by the Santa Ynez mountains, and brightened by southern California's steaming hot climate, the setting makes it easy to get lost in a fantasy. My thoughts were turning noir. Maybe it was the detective fiction I'd brought with me to lounge poolside at the Biltmore's Coral Casino. Here, in the one-time playground of Greta Garbo and Errol Flynn, I discovered private detective Lew Archer, a character created by Ross MacDonald (following the template set down by Hammett and Chandler before the war) who investigated crime in a seaside town called Santa Teresa, a thinly veiled Santa Barbara.

There's a link between detective fiction and travel, explained University of California Santa Cruz professor Paul Skenazy. "The best stories come from knowing the territory. Detective stories are at heart, local. The writer has to know the terrain, how people act towards one another, the alleyways and byways they might hide in."

One may not think that this serenely beautiful and wealthy town would have much to hide. But as MacDonald showed us, where there are rich people, there will also be poor people. From such divisions come stories, lots of them.

There was certainly a backstory to the **San Ysidro Ranch**'s Old Adobe dining room where we enjoyed an elegant brunch. The upscale hotel was originally owned by twenties-era film star Ronald Coleman. JFK and Jackie had honeymooned here in 1950. The aura of Hollywood glamour still clings to the 500-acre onetime citrus ranch. It's also a good starting point for hiking into the Santa Ynez Mountains. Like a detective searching the present for clues to the past, trails connect us to the hidden gems of nature. They slow down our sense of time and surprise us with their juxtapositions. The **Cold Spring Canyon trail** is an alder-shaded, three-mile hike (roundtrip) to the top of **Monetecito Overlook**, giving you a spectacular view of the coastline and the Channel Islands.

To a certain extent, you can project yourself into a noir fantasy simply by proximity to older California architecture. For that, we visited the 1929 **Spanish-Moorish County Courthouse**. (Open to the public with guided tours available once a day, 1100 block of Anacapa St; 805/962-6464.) No matter how many times we visit, we always find ourselves back at the **Mission Santa Barbara** (2201 Laguna Street; 805/ 682-4149) founded by the Franciscans in 1786. You can take a self-guided tour of the mission ($2 donation), visit the **Museum of Natural History**, or walk downhill to the **Mission Rose Garden** (at Los Olivos and Laguna Streets) with more than a thousand varieties of roses.

In the hot months of summer, people stroll up and down State Street, finding shade in the shops, cool drinks in the cafes. Our favorite respite was at **Pierre La Fonde & Company/Deli** (516 State Street; 805/962-1455). My partner chose a delectable, oversized cinnamon bun with her latte; I ordered huevos rancheros. Upon arrival, both dishes looked so good, we had to split each and share to preserve the harmony.

But the biggest culinary thrill we experienced was a take-out dinner from **La Super-Rica Taqueria**. Indeed, it was as tasty as the four-course swordfish and New Zealand lamb chop dinner we enjoyed at the **Biltmore's Patio Restaurant**. As the reviews all proclaim, this little taco stand at 622 N Milpas St (805/963-4940) was Julia Child's favorite restaurant in Santa Barbara. Was it an exaggeration? Not at all.

La Super-Rica is located in what may once have been a small home, a white-with-turquoise-trim beach shack surrounded by picnic tables in an outdoor patio and shaded by a covered awning. The line snaked out the front door. Behind the counter, elderly women patted down tortillas made from scratch. We ordered tacos de rajas (grilled chiles with cheese) and tacos de calabacitas (squash and marinated pork) and for good measure, a side of guacamole. Then, despite the obvious pleasure of the local crowd dining in the patio, we drove back to the Biltmore where we dined al fresco on our secluded patio adjoining our cottage lodging. The mountains turned purple in the setting sun as we finished a bottle of white wine. The effort it took to move five steps indoors revealed the extent of our intoxication.

A detective movie was showing on television that night—*Harper*, starring Paul Newman, based on Ross MacDonald's character Lew Archer. They had moved the setting of the 1966 movie from Santa Barbara to Los Angeles, but we didn't mind. The essence of noir is doom and desperation, after all. Santa Barbara seems anything but that. We drifted off to sleep in the jasmine-scented night, relaxed and grateful, happy to be mere tourists in the noir world, regretting only that we had to leave.

WHERE TO STAY: FOUR SEASONS BILTMORE, 1260 CHANNEL DRIVE, SANTA BARBARA, CA 93108; (805) 969-2261; WWW.FOURSEASONS.COM

SAN YSIDRO RANCH, 900 SAN YSIDRO LANE SANTA BARBARA, CA 93108; (800) 368-6788 OR (805) 969-5046; WWW.SANYSIDRORANCH.COM.

TEACHING CALIFORNIA

"UNIQUE IN AMERICAN HISTORY"

BY KATHY TALLEY-JONES

Most Americans are proud of the states they live in, but there's no question about it: California really is exceptional. It even says so in the state Department of Education's history and social science framework, which makes the case explicitly: "Students learn the story of their home state, unique in American history in terms of its vast and varied geography, its many waves of immigration beginning with pre-Columbian societies, its continuous diversity, economic energy, and rapid growth."

And when do students do this? In fourth grade, when they're ten and eleven years old. Everyone knows that kids this age have questing and challenging minds eager to explore the panoply that is California history. Most of these students are lucky to have fourth-grade teachers who are committed professionals who manage to balance the competing demands of testing, curriculum requirements, and classroom management. These teachers present a nuanced and thorough look at the state from its earliest residents right up to the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, a few focus only on the missions and the Gold Rush and then move on. Okay, we've done California, now it's time for equivalent fraction problems.

Without looking for creative ways to introduce state and local history, that's pretty much it. But the good news is that students tackle world history beginning in sixth grade. Because California is at a hub that connects so much of the world, state and local history can illuminate international studies. Many museums and nonprofit organizations located within the state provide excellent opportunities for exploring California's global connections.

Why should teachers be distracted from following the textbooks the state has adopted? Because museum collections, exhibitions, and programs can help students build the skills that are emphasized in the state framework along with the events they learn about, skills such as chronological and spatial thinking, research, evidence, point of view, and historical interpretation. Museums display artifacts that connect to historical events, provide primary materials for historical interpretation, and develop programs that lead students to understand that people involved in world events are people just like themselves, their families, their neighbors, and their friends.

"WHAT'S GOING ON?"

The Oakland Museum of California's exhibition "What's Going On—California and the Vietnam Era" is a case in point. High schoolers study the Vietnam War in the tenth and/or the eleventh grades, in which they look at U.S. foreign policy after World War II and the causes and consequences of the Cold War. (It is, alas, often rushed through at the end of the school year, however.) The Oakland Museum exhibition brings home ways in which "California was the epicenter of the war's national front. Within its boundaries were most of the nation's defense contractors, principal military centers from which troops were trained and trans-

OAKLAND CALIF. 11,000 mi →

A long way from home, Pfc. Clairborne L. Shaw of Oakland at Chu Lai, Vietnam, June 4, 1966.

OAKLAND TRIBUNE COLLECTION, OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA. GIFT OF ANG NEWSPAPERS.

ported, centers of legendary peace and anti-draft protests, the vanguard of the New Right politics ushered in by Reagan's election [as governor] in 1966, and the portal for most of the returning military and Southeast Asian immigrants."

Teachers might be able to find personal connections with the war, even though it ended more than thirty years ago, in every one of their classes. Not only is the war still palpable in today's political debate, but students all over the state have relatives, friends, or neighbors who worked for military contractors, served in the military, protested or supported the war, or who immigrated from Southeast Asia as a consequence. Some of these community members will be willing to come to the classroom and talk about their experiences. The Community in the Classroom website suggests ways to locate speakers and develop questions for them.

The Oakland Museum exhibition includes photos, letters, TV news footage, music, oral histories, and clothing. Visitors can hear the stories of soldiers who traveled west through Oakland Army Base and from refugees who journeyed east from Vietnam. Teachers can encourage students to research their own community's connection to the war. Are there military bases nearby? Many were decommissioned in the 1990s. How have they been repurposed? Is there any evidence of the site's role in the war? Who in the community served in the war? Who didn't?

Are there defense contractors in the community? Who worked there? Also in the 1990s defense contractors consolidated so that there are fewer such firms today. In fact, this journal is edited in the former Hughes Aircraft corporate headquarters now rededicated as Loyola Marymount University classrooms and administrative offices. Who works for these contractors today? What do they manufacture or what services do they provide? Why did they set up shop in the community?

Encourage students to interview family members, friends, and neighbors about the war. Did they serve in the military? Did they protest the war? Did they leave their homeland as a result of the war and settle in the United States? How do they commemorate the war? Have they ever visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.? Do they have favorite songs, TV shows, or movies about Vietnam? As evidenced by the dialogue in the 2004 presidential election, the Vietnam War is a sensitive topic and students will very likely welcome guidance on ways to approach their subjects.

Students' findings about the impact of the Vietnam War on their community can be presented in essays, debates in class, videos, songs, exhibits, and short stories. Said one student whose class studied the war:

> "I understand now more than ever how this war affected everyone who was involved. Many of the parents, not to mention the veterans, and even our bus driver, all experienced this war in different ways. So, if it affected these people so traumatically, it is easier to imagine how it changed an entire country."

"Teaching California" is a column providing resources to teachers, parents, and students for integrating the study of California and its peoples into elementary, middle, and high school learning. California History *welcomes feedback about this column and encourages teachers, students, and cultural organizations to share their strategies for teaching California history by contacting Managing Editor Kathy Talley-Jones at ktalley@lmu.edu.*

RESOURCES

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PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

William Mulholland and the St. Francis Dam Disaster

By Donald C. Jackson and Norris Hundley, Jr.

A few minutes before midnight on March 12, 1928, the St. Francis Dam gave way under the hydrostatic pressure of a full reservoir. During the early morning hours of March 13, some 38,000 acre-feet of water surged down from an elevation of 1,834 feet above the sea. Roiling through San Francisquito Canyon and the Santa Clara Valley in southern California, the flood wreaked havoc on the town of Santa Paula and dozens of farms and rural communities. By the time it washed into the Pacific Ocean near Ventura at daybreak some fifty-five miles downriver, more than four hundred people lay dead. Damage to property was in the millions of dollars. Considered the greatest civil-engineering disaster in modern U.S. history, it was the nation's deadliest dam failure ever save for the 1889 Johnstown Flood in Pennsylvania, which took nearly 2,200 lives. The St. Francis Dam tragedy engendered great public interest not only because of the deaths and destruction, but also because it involved the failure of a curved-gravity concrete dam, the design type then planned for the massive Hoover (Boulder Canyon) Dam on the Colorado River. The disaster prompted critics to urge reconsideration of that project—which was being vigorously promoted by Los Angeles civic authorities—as well as to call for renewed scrutiny of efforts by the city of Los Angeles (builder/owner of St. Francis Dam) to expand its municipal water-supply system. And it focused attention on William Mulholland, longtime head of the city's Bureau of Water Works and Supply and the official in charge of the failed dam's design and construction.[1]

Despite the absence of a prominent roadside marker located amidst the concrete remains at the dam site, the failure of the St. Francis Dam remains an enduring—almost mythic—story within the history of California and the nation.[2] Part of this tale's fascination derives from the sheer horror of the event. But much of it relates to the disaster's effect upon the reputation of William Mulholland, the engineer credited with building the 233-mile-long Los Angeles Aqueduct that delivered prodigious quantities of Owens River water from the Sierra Nevada into the southland starting in 1913. For good reason, the aqueduct is viewed as an essential component of the region's hydraulic infrastructure responsible for much of the growth and economic development associated with modern Los Angeles. In addition, the aqueduct is now (and was at the time of its construction) considered by many to comprise an audacious "water grab" allowing control over the Owens River to pass from Inyo County settlers into the hands of Los Angeles.[3]

Not surprisingly, the potent image of an engineer responsible for the city's controversial—yet incredibly important—water supply system being also responsible for a key storage dam that collapsed in horrible tragedy has etched itself into the historical consciousness of Californians and countless others. Those memories have attracted scholars, with two in particular shaping the public's current knowledge of the disaster and influencing its attitudes toward William Mulholland. Drawn first to the subject was Charles F. Outland, author of *Man-Made Disaster: The Story of St. Francis Dam*, a carefully crafted book. As a teenager living in Santa Paula at the time of the disaster, he witnessed firsthand the tragic aftermath of the flood. This experience later energized him to convey the impact of the disaster on Santa Clara Valley residents with moving, yet tempered eloquence. Though first published over four decades

Considered the greatest civil engineering disaster in California's history, the collapse of the St. Francis Dam took more than 400 lives in the Santa Clara River Valley during the early morning hours of March 13, 1928. Designed and built under the authority of William Mulholland, a legendary engineer in the history of Los Angeles, the dam incorporated more than 100,000 cubic yards of concrete into its massive structure. Left: A huge piece of concrete that toppled from the center/east section of the dam dwarfs human investigators.

Henry E. Huntington Library, Courtney Collection

NEAR RIGHT: *Salvage efforts underway near the remains of the Southern California Edison Company camp near Kemp, about fifteen miles downstream from the dam. Eighty-four men sleeping at the camp died when the flood from St. Francis Reservoir smashed through at 1:20 am on March 13.*
DC JACKSON/DAMHISTORY.COM

CENTER: *Effect of the flood on a Santa Paula residence over thirty-five miles downstream from the dam site. The exact number of victims killed during the flood remains unknown but, according to Charles Outland, "any death figure over 450 or under 400 is unrealistic."*
DC JACKSON/DAMHISTORY.COM

FAR RIGHT: *Remains of the Willard Bridge that crossed the Santa Clara River at Santa Paula. While the surge of water receded dramatically after about twenty minutes, at peak flow it extended for a distance of more than a half mile across the valley floor.*
DC JACKSON/DAMHISTORY.COM

ago in 1963 and then briefly revised and expanded in 1977, Outland's account remains the essential overall history of the tragedy. Arriving later to the topic was J. David Rogers, a geologist whose particular interest was in the mechanics of the dam failure and the physical causes of the collapse. His findings were set out in two articles, one published in 1992 and the other in 1995, and expanded upon in an interview published in 1997 and another longer interview published on the Internet in 2000 and also circulated in a CD format.[4]

Though the purposes and emphases of Outland and Rogers differed, their works generally reinforced one another's findings. The views of the two were not always in harmony, however, and that was nowhere more clear than in their attitudes toward Mulholland's role in the St. Francis disaster. On this point, Outland was straightforward and adamant: "In the final analysis, . . . the responsibility was his alone." Rogers was neither so unequivocal nor direct in his judgment, but he nonetheless believed that blame was misdirected. In the matter of the dam's collapse, the culprit was not Mulholland, he insisted, but excusable ignorance. Put another way, the problem lay not with Mulholland but with a "civil engineering community" allegedly lacking the geological and technical knowledge—specifically, lacking "a modern appreciation of uplift theory"—to build a safe dam in San Francisquito Canyon.[5] In adopting this perspective, Rogers pointedly defends Mulholland as a "rugged individualist" and avers that "we should be so lucky as to have any men with just half his character, integrity, imagination and leadership today."[6] In the last several years, Rogers's view of Mulholland's responsibility (or lack thereof) for the disaster has found its way into press coverage and public consciousness.

The *Los Angeles Times* greeted the publication of Rogers's first article in 1992 with the headline: "The Night the Dam Broke: Geological Look 64 Years Later Clears Mulholland and His Engineering Marvel in Tragedy That Killed 450." A year later Margaret Leslie Davis's *Rivers in the*

Desert: William Mulholland and the Inventing of Los Angeles described Rogers's "assessment" as an "exoneration" of Mulholland. So, too, did Ruth Pitman's *Roadside History of California* (1995): "Geological knowledge at the time the dam site was selected simply wasn't sophisticated enough. . . . Thus, more than fifty years after his death, Mulholland was exonerated." In essential agreement was Kim Weir's *Southern California Handbook* (1998): "The general condemnation of William Mulholland for the St. Francis Dam disaster went unchallenged until 1992" when Rogers "largely exonerated him." Also picking up on the seeming significance of Rogers's pronouncements was Catherine Mulholland—granddaughter of William Mulholland—whose biography, *William Mulholland and the Rise of Los Angeles* (2000), heralded Rogers as "masterfully" analyzing the disaster and credits him for "the apparent vindication of Mulholland."[7]

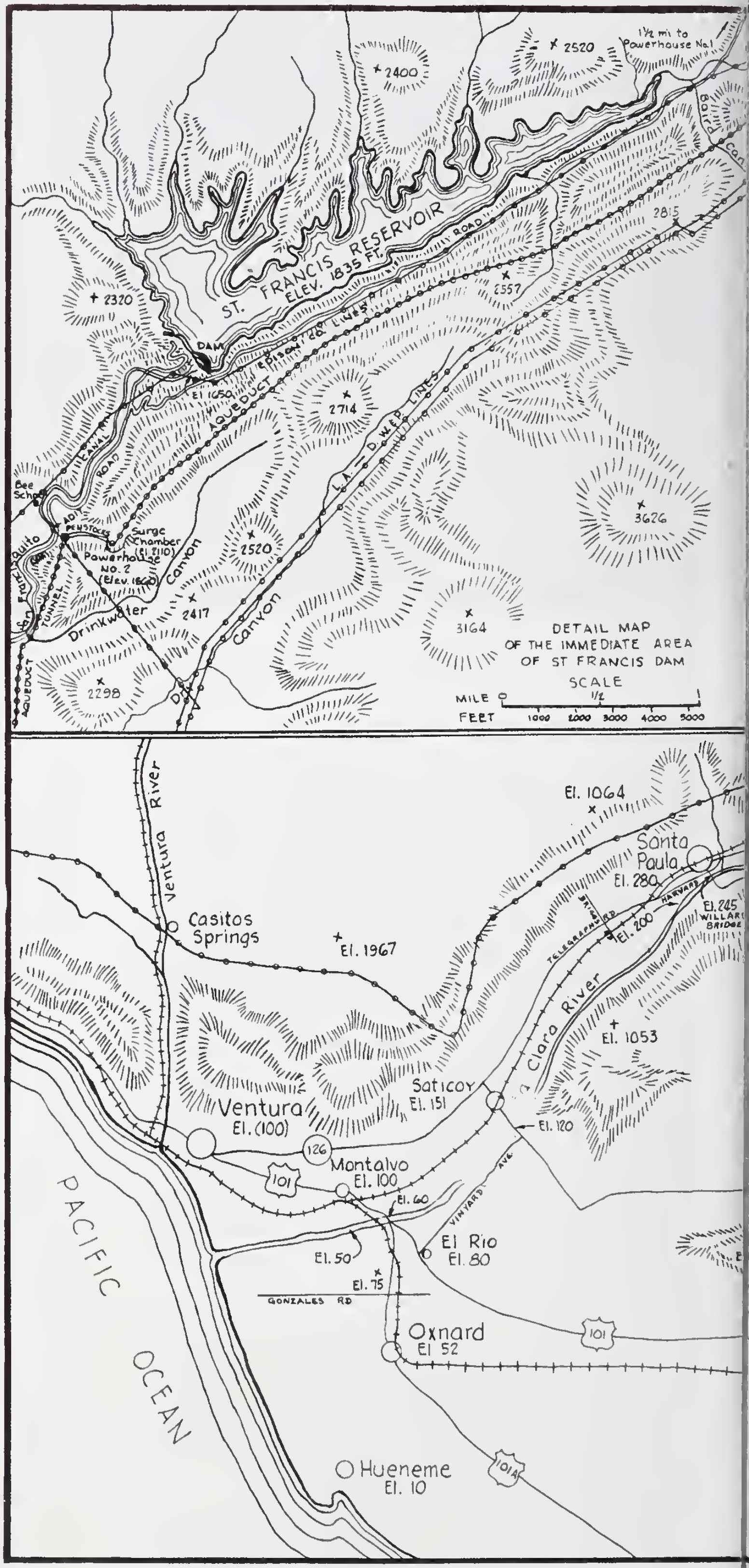
In this article, we do not offer a conventional recounting of the origins and aftermath of the disaster. Rather, we analyze key investigations into the cause of the collapse and relate these inquiries to those of Charles Outland in the 1960s and J. David Rogers in the 1990s, especially as they concern Mulholland's ostensible responsibility for the tragedy. In seeking to discern where such responsibility most reasonably resides, we also consider Mulholland's dambuilding practices in light of California's 1917 dam-safety law and within the context of professional civil engineering knowledge and norms of his day. For reasons suggested by Outland and because of additional evidence set out in this essay, we arrive at the judgment that William Mulholland was responsible for the St. Francis Dam failure.

PRELUDE TO DISASTER

The Los Angeles Aqueduct descends more than 2,500 feet from the intake dam near Independence to its entry into the San Fernando Valley at Sylmar. The biggest part of that drop comes when the aqueduct leaves Fairmount Reservoir and pierces the Sierra Madre escarpment separating the western Mojave Desert (or Antelope Valley) from coastal southern California. The five-mile-long

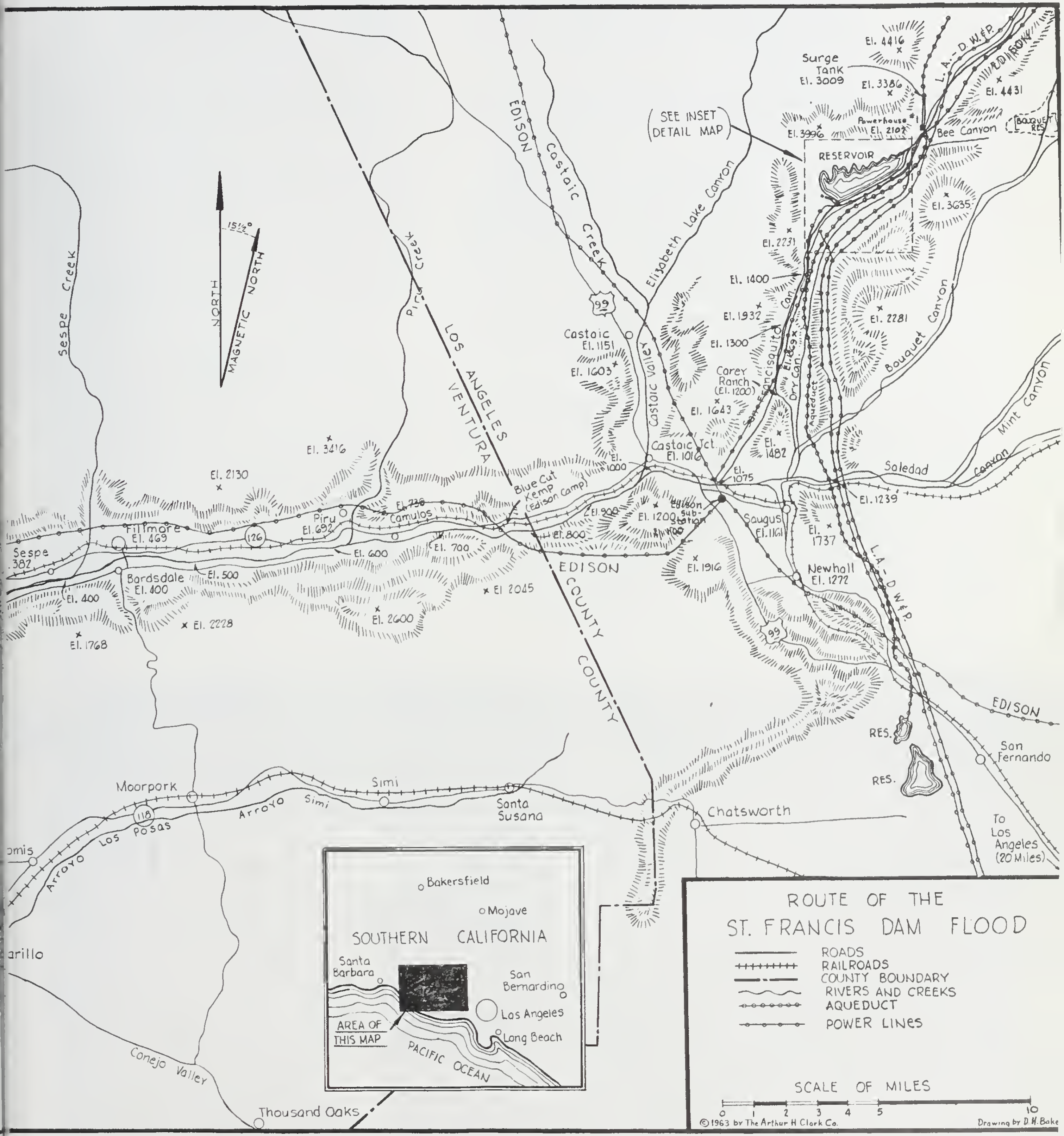
The St. Francis Dam lay in remote northwestern Los Angeles County (at upper right), but much of the land inundated by the flood was in Ventura County (center, lower left). Floodwaters surged southward down San Francisquito Creek for about ten miles before joining the Santa Clara River near Saugus. The torrent then churned west for over forty miles, passing through the heart of the Santa Clara Valley before reaching the Pacific Ocean just south of Ventura. Today, motorists on Interstate 5 (Golden State Freeway) cross the flood path just a short distance northeast of Magic Mountain theme park. By driving west from I-5 on State Route 126 it is possible to parallel the flood path that ravaged the farming community of Bardsdale and inundated low-lying areas of Fillmore and Santa Paula. Today, the Santa Clara Valley citrus groves that were laid to waste have long since been restored, but memories of "The Flood" remain strong among valley residents.

Reprinted with permission from Charles Outland, *Man-Made Disaster: The Story of St. Francis Dam* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Col, 1977).


1½ mi to Powerhouse No. 1
2520
2400
St. Francis Reservoir Elev. 1835 Ft.
Road
2815
2320
2557
Dam
El. 1650
Edison Co. Lines
Aqueduct
2714
L.A. D.W.P. Lines
Canal
Road
Bee School
Adit
Penstocks
Surge Chamber (El. 2110)
Powerhouse No. 2 (Elev. 1600)
Canyon
2520
3626
San Francisquito
Tunnel
Drinkwater
2417
Canyon
3164
Aqueduct
2298
Detail Map of the Immediate Area of St Francis Dam
Scale
Mile 0 ½
Feet 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000
Ventura River
El. 1064
Santa Paula El. 280
El. 245 Willard Bridge
Harvard
Telegraph Rd
El. 200
Casitos Springs
El. 1967
Santa Clara River
El. 1053
Saticoy El. 151
El. 120
Ventura El. (100)
126
Montalvo El. 100
101
El. 60
Vinyard Ave
Pacific Ocean
El Rio El. 80
El. 50
El. 75
Gonzales Rd
Oxnard El 52
101
Hueneme El. 10
101A

Above: *More than 75 years after the St. Francis flood swept through the Santa Clara Valley, the effects of the disaster on the landscape are not always easy to discern. As shown in this recent photograph, however, sharp-eyed observers traveling along San Francisquito Canyon Road can still see large concrete chunks that broke off the dam during the collapse.*

DC Jackson



ROUTE OF THE ST. FRANCIS DAM FLOOD

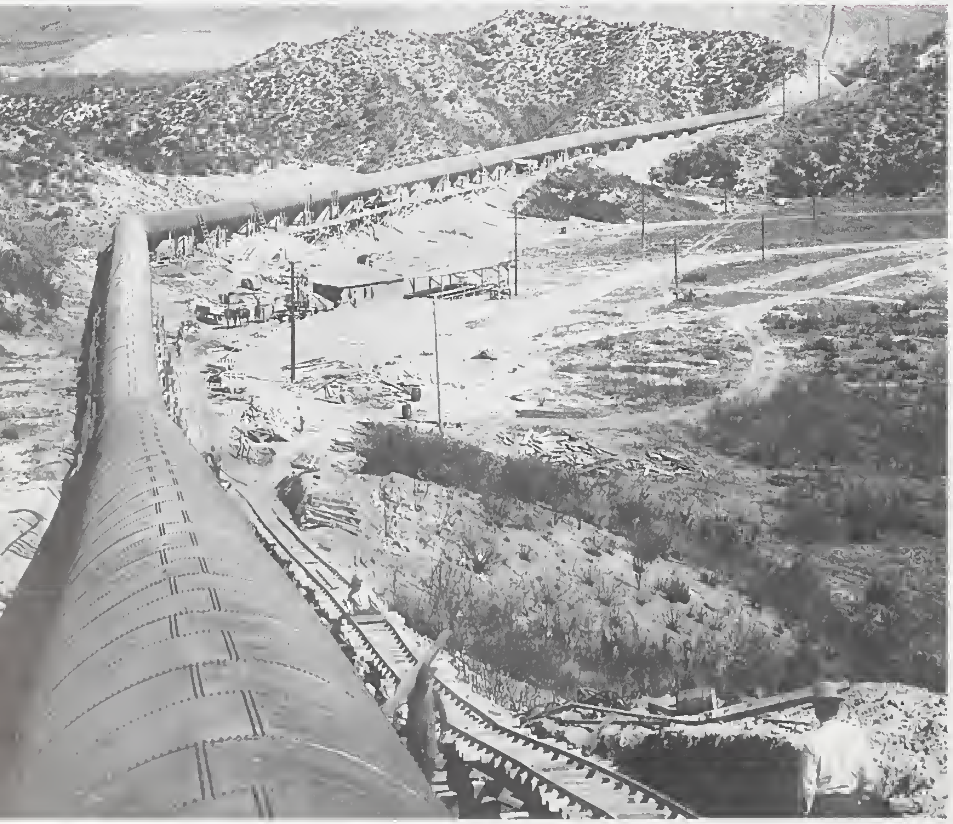
ROADS
RAILROADS
COUNTY BOUNDARY
RIVERS AND CREEKS
AQUEDUCT
POWER LINES
SCALE OF MILES
0 1 2 3 4 5 10
NORTH
MAGNETIC NORTH
15½°
SEE INSET DETAIL MAP
RESERVOIR
Surge Tank El. 3009
El. 4416
El. 3386
El. 4431
El. 3996
Powerhouse El. 2107
Bee Canyon
BOUQUET RES.
L.A.-D.W.&P.
EDISON
El. 3635
El. 2231
El. 1400
El. 1932
El. 1300
El. 2281
Bouquet Canyon
San Francisquito Can.
Dry Can.
El. 1629
Aqueduct
Corey Ranch (El. 1200)
El. 1643
El. 1482
Mint Canyon
Saledad Canyon
El. 1239
El. 1075
Castaic Jct. El. 1016
El. 1000
Castaic Valley
Castaic El. 1151
El. 1603
99
Castaic Creek
Elizabeth Lake Canyon
EDISON
Piru Creek
LOS ANGELES
VENTURA
COUNTY
Sespe Creek
El. 3416
El. 2130
Blue Cut
Kemp (Edison Camp)
El. 738
Camulos
Piru El. 692
Fillmore El. 469
126
Sespe El. 382
El. 600
El. 700
El. 900
El. 800
El. 1200
Edison Sub-station
El. 1100
Saugus El. 1161
El. 1737
El. 1916
EDISON
Newhall El. 1272
L.A.-D.W.&P.
99
Bardsdale El. 400
El. 500
El. 400
El. 2045
El. 2600
El. 2228
El. 1768
EDISON
RES.
RES.
San Fernando
To Los Angeles (20 Miles)
Chatsworth
Santa Susana
Simi
Arroyo Simi
Moorpark
118
Arroyo Los Posas
omis
arillo
Conejo Valley
Thousand Oaks
Bakersfield
Mojave
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Santa Barbara
San Bernardino
Los Angeles
Long Beach
AREA OF THIS MAP
PACIFIC OCEAN

©1963 by The Arthur H Clark Co.

Drawing by D.H. Bake

Elizabeth Tunnel draws water from Fairmount Reservoir and feeds into San Francisquito Power Plant No. 1. From there, water flows south through a six-mile-long tunnel in the east canyon wall before dropping down to Power Plant No. 2 along the banks of San Francisquito Creek (from there, other tunnels extend the aqueduct to Sylmar about twenty miles farther south). About one and a half miles upstream from Power Plant No. 2 lies a broad, open area bounded by a narrow gorge at the southern end. This gorge and the flat expanse of land above it—which had been used by Mulholland for an aqueduct construction camp between 1908 and 1913—comprised the site of the St. Francis Dam and Reservoir.

Mulholland's original plan for the aqueduct system did not include a reservoir at the St. Francis site.[8] But by 1922, with the city population three times larger than when the aqueduct was proposed and expected to be four times greater within a year, Mulholland decided that prudence called for additional water storage facilities. In the following year he developed plans for a reservoir and dam in San Francisquito Canyon. He selected the locale because of its proximity to the aqueduct right-of-way and because it would "provide emergency water supply against low years and against failure of the Owens River Aqueduct." He also claimed the proposed reservoir would enable the capture of "surplus water of the aqueduct used for power during the winter months" that was then "wasted into the Santa Clara and Los Angeles Rivers."[9] The St. Francis site was certainly suitable for storing a large quantity of water but, in other ways, the location was less than ideal. Specifically, water released into the reservoir from the aqueduct below Power Plant No. 1 could not subsequently be used to generate electricity at San Francisquito Power Plant No. 2. Another shortcoming was evidenced in the city's 1911 annual report on the aqueduct's construction, which described the rock along the eastern side of San Francisquito Canyon as "exceedingly rough, and the dip and strike of the slate [schist] such as to threaten slips."[10] Joseph B. Lippincott, Mulholland's chief assistant engineer during aqueduct construction,



LEFT: *Extending across the barren expanse of the western Mojave Desert, the aqueduct carries water over 200 miles from the Owens River Valley to the city. This section is the Soledad siphon near Saugus, about ten miles south of San Francisquito Canyon.*
JOSEPH B. LIPPINCOTT COLLECTION, WATER RESOURCES CENTER ARCHIVES

RIGHT: *Workers posed in front of an adit, the entrance to the Los Angeles Aqueduct tunnel, being excavated deep within the east side of San Francisquito Canyon, circa 1911. Mulholland resorted to such expensive tunnel work in the canyon because of fear that the exposed rock on the canyon wall (fractured schist) would "slip" or give way if a "side-hill excavation" were made to accommodate an open cut canal.*
JULIAN HINDS COLLECTION, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

long remembered the difficult geological character of the east canyon ridge and, after acknowledging he had been "intimately connected with the driving of a series of tunnels for our aqueduct through the range of mountains on which the left or east abutment of the dam rested," later declared: "The rock that we encountered was a broken schist and a good deal of it expanded when it came in contact with the air and was what the tunnel men called 'heavy ground.' We had great difficulty in holding this ground [for the aqueduct tunnel] before it was lined with concrete."[11]

While the east abutment's faulty schist would later reverberate through the story of St. Francis Dam, it was the reduction in hydroelectric power capacity that prompted E. F. Scattergood, the city's chief electrical engineer, to criticize use of the St. Francis site for a major reservoir.[12] Scattergood's objections, however, held no sway over the authority allowed Mulholland by city political leaders to build the dam where and how he saw fit. Reinforcing Mulholland's control over the project was California's 1917 dam-safety law, which exempted municipalities from supervision by the State Engineer when building dams. Thus, when Mulholland chose to build, and subsequently enlarge, a concrete gravity dam at the St. Francis site, he could do so without substantive review by anyone outside his immediate control.[13]

Mulholland attained this authority after inauspicious beginnings. He arrived in Los Angeles as a twenty-two-year-old poor Irish immigrant in 1877. After a failed venture to find gold in Arizona, he returned to Los Angeles the following year and worked as a laborer tending ditches for the Los Angeles City Water Company. The president of the company rode by Mulholland's work site one day, noticed his single-minded attention to his job, and asked him his name and what he was doing. "It's none of your damned business!" growled Mulholland. Instead of responding with anger, the president rewarded him for his dedication by promoting him to foreman—an advancement that led to many others, including eventually superintendent and chief engineer. Unlike many of his peers such as Arthur Powell

Davis, John Freeman, and Charles E. Grunsky, who also attained prominence as civil and hydraulic engineers, Mulholland possessed no university training and was essentially self-taught, deriving the core of his hydraulic-engineering knowledge from on-the-job experience. He had a quick mind, a remarkable memory, and, apparently for much of his early career, an appetite to supplement his extensive practical work with knowledge gleaned from technical books and articles covering engineering and geology.[14]

Photograph of William Mulholland, circa 1920, a few years after completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, which brought him international fame as chief engineer in charge of design and construction.
Los Angeles Public Library

Mulholland had the respect of his superiors from the outset of his tenure as superintendent of the Los Angeles water system. Over the years he reported to a series of supervisory groups whose names and responsibilities changed but whose managerial authority was embedded in the city charter. Following Los Angeles's acquisition in 1902 of the privately owned distribution system and the hiring of Mulholland to continue as superintendent, the Board of Water Commissioners became his boss; then in 1911 the Board of Public Service Commissioners, created in anticipation of there being both a water and power system, succeeded to that role; fourteen years later—while construction of St. Francis Dam was underway—authority passed to the newly formed Board of Water and Power Commissioners.[15]

Mulholland's multiple superiors notwithstanding, he was in control. Practical considerations played a role, and paramount among them was the knowledge he brought to his job. When the city bought out the privately owned Los Angeles Water Company, little about the system and its operation existed on paper. Mulholland compensated for the omission by committing to memory the complex distribution system of pumps, ditches, hydrants, pipes, and valves. When challenged during the purchase negotiations, Mulholland called for a map and proceeded to identify details about the pipes in every city street. Those details were then corroborated by excavations. This impressive show of knowledge and bravado insured his continuation as superintendent—a superintendent whose knowledge automatically translated into power.[16]

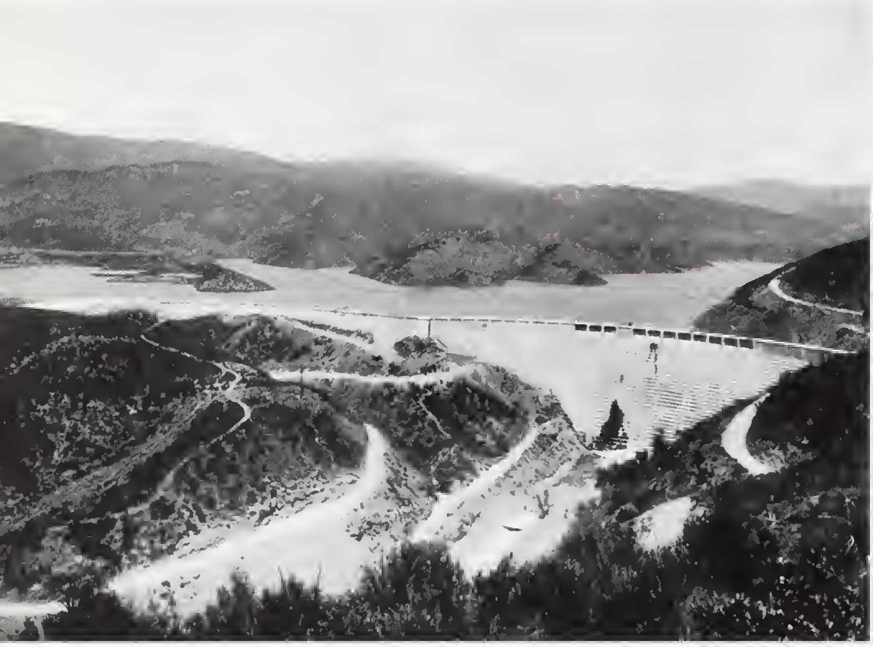
Reinforcing Mulholland's control was the absence among the commissioners of engineers with training and practical expertise in the building of water-supply systems. The commissioners tended to be lawyers, businessmen, doctors, investors in real estate, and the like—"citizens [with] . . . part-time responsibilities," as Vincent Ostrom has noted, and unable to "undertake . . . [or] even assume the initiative in the formulation of policies."[17] Put simply, none of the commissioners possessed the credentials or knowledge to challenge Mulholland even if one of them had sought to do so—which none ever did. Their attitudes were epitomized by R. F. Del Valle, an attorney who served on the Board of Public Service Commissioners and later chaired the Board of Water and Power Commissioners. "Mr. Mulholland," observed Del Valle shortly after the St. Francis failure, "has had charge of the department ever since its inception. . . . During that time he conceived the construction of the aqueduct, built it, has built nineteen dams for the department, and during that whole time, the board has found that he has used the proper judgment, has been competent, efficient in every manner, and therefore the matter . . . as to whom he should consult or what he should do in detail has been left entirely to his judgment, because the board has had the utmost confidence, and has now, in his ability as an engineer."[18]

Members of his staff also ardently admired Mulholland. "The Chief was always resourceful, fearless, and never flustered in a pinch," recalled George Read, head of the water meter division and a member of the city water department's "old guard." Read further gushed, "I know that in being associated with him I learned to think more deeply, to appreciate more fully the wonders of nature, and to see the humorous side of life." Such admiration extended beyond his immediate coterie to the local citizenry. A reporter captured the public's infatuation and faith in Mulholland's judgment with an exaggerated boast: "If Bill Mulholland should say that he is lining the [Owens Valley] aqueduct with green cheese because green cheese is better than concrete, this town would not only believe the guff but take the oath that it was so."[19]

Mulholland had his critics, of course, with Owens Valley residents at the head of any list, but most people of Los Angeles likely agreed with engineer W. W. Hurlbut when he declared that "the public at large realizes . . . his untiring efforts in providing the city with the most essential element of its growth—nay, its very life blood." Among his staff, Mulholland's stature was such that, contemporaneously with completion of the St. Francis Dam, Hurlbut could avow in *Western Construction News*: "Since time immemorial every profession, every line of human pursuit, has had its outstanding character, its shining light, its great leader. In the profession of water works engineering there is an outstanding figure, a leader who . . . has proved to be a builder of an empire—an empire of unsurpassed progress in municipal development—William Mulholland." Heady praise, indeed, and praise reflective of a staff little prone to question the wisdom and directives of a larger-than-life (almost super-human) leader.[20]

GRAVITY DAM DESIGN

Still, in choosing the basic design for St. Francis in 1922–1923, the sixty-seven-year-old Mulholland did not prove particularly innovative or technologically adventuresome in opting for a concrete gravity dam. The modern form of such structures originated with French engineers in the 1850s and 1860s who (knowing both the weight of water and the weight of masonry) used mathematical analysis to proportion the dimensions of masonry gravity dams featuring vertical upstream faces. In simplest terms, these designs embodied a basic guiding principle: Place enough material (either stone masonry or concrete) in the dam so that the horizontal water pressure exerted by the reservoir would be insufficient to tip the structure over or push it downstream. This design technique resulted in the development of cross-sectional "profiles" for gravity dams that were triangular in shape and gradually widened in thickness from top to bottom (Note: because the cross-section of masonry gravity dams seemingly mimicked the shape of a human foot, the profile's "toe" was considered to be at the bottom of the downstream face, while the "heel" was at the bottom of the upstream face.) In terms of stability, it is important to appreciate that the amount of material necessary for safety in a gravity dam is directly proportional to the height of water impounded in the reservoir. Specifically, if a gravity dam is increased in height, its thickness must also be increased in order to maintain stability. To raise the height without widening the base is to court disaster.[21]



Completed St. Francis Dam and reservoir looking upstream (the east side of the canyon is on the right with the west side on the left). The curved gravity design is similar to that previously used for the Hollywood/Mulholland Dam, but the St. Francis design was built along a longer arc radius than its predecessor. In addition, the St. Francis design featured a long, shallow wing dyke running atop the west abutment ridge that was not required at the Hollywood site. Although the two dams were not identical, Mulholland's staff developed the St. Francis design as a direct outgrowth of the Hollywood/Mulholland design.

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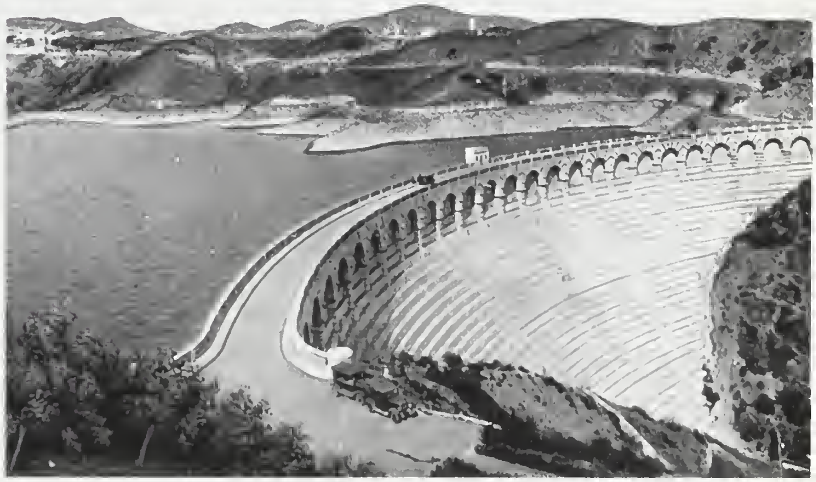
By at least the 1890s, engineers began to appreciate that water from a reservoir could also seep under a dam and exert pressure upward. This phenomenon of "uplift" (so-called because it tends to lift the dam upward) destabilizes gravity dams by reducing the structure's "effective weight," thereby lessening its ability to resist horizontal water pressure. Uplift can act through bedrock foundations that, in the abstract, are strong enough to bear the weight of the dam, but are fractured or fissured and thus susceptible to seepage and water saturation.[22] The deleterious effect of uplift upon a gravity dam can be countered in various ways: 1) excavating foundation "cut-off" trenches that reduce the ability of water to seep under the structure; 2) grouting the foundation (which involves pressurized injection of wet mortar into drilled holes), thereby filling underground fissures and impeding subsurface water flow; 3) draining the foundation and the interior of the dam through use of porous pipes, relief wells, and tunnels to remove seepage; 4) increasing the thickness of the dam's profile (and hence its weight) in order to counter the destabilizing effect of water pushing upward.[23]

Although generally amenable to mathematical analysis, concrete gravity dams require enormous quantities of material to insure stability. As a result, they can be quite expensive.[24] Nonetheless, many engineers consider such dams—if built properly—to be reliable structures. Additionally, they present imposing downstream facades, an attribute that engineers and politicians can value because of belief that it symbolically conveys a sense of both safety and civic achievement.[25]

While material suitable for an earth-fill embankment dam—a type which Mulholland had built numerous times before—was not readily available in San Francisquito Canyon, the precise reasoning that led him to choose a concrete curved-gravity structure for the St. Francis Dam remains uncertain.[26] In the period 1922–1923 Mulholland called for designs for two concrete gravity dams, the first for a site in the Hollywood Hills, about four miles from downtown Los Angeles (initially known as Weid Canyon Dam, then Hollywood Dam, and, finally, Mulholland Dam and Hollywood Reservoir), and the second for San Francisquito Canyon (the St. Francis Dam). The plans were similar, since Mullholland instructed that the Hollywood design be adapted to the St. Francis site. Still, no detailed descriptions of these designs were published in the technical press; in particular, our knowledge of the St. Francis Dam is fragmentary.[27]

In accord with protocol established during construction of the Los Angeles aqueduct, it appears that the initial design for the two dams was delegated to an assistant engineer/draftsman or an "office engineer" who reported to Mulholland.[28] At the Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest that was convened to investigate the collapse of St. Francis Dam, Edgar Bayley, the assistant engineer for Hollywood Dam, described his role in developing a preliminary design ("the cross-sectional transfer profile") for that structure.[29] But Bayley explicitly denied having any experience with concrete gravity dams and emphasized Mulholland's commanding role:

> Q. [By the coroner]: How many of this type [concrete gravity] dams have you designed and constructed?
>
> A. [Bayley] I have constructed none, have had nothing to do with the construction of any, except being that the Hollywood Dam complied with the profile we had to work by.
>
> Q. Didn't I understand that you are the man that designed the thing, the Hollywood Dam?
>
> A. No, I just testified that I hàd to do with



Mulholland Dam in the Hollywood Hills, a few miles west of downtown Los Angeles. Completed in 1924, Mulholland Dam (also identified at times as Weid Canyon Dam or Hollywood Dam) was the first concrete gravity structure built by Los Angeles under William Mulholland's authority. Work on St. Francis Dam commenced soon after completion of Mulholland Dam. Testimony at the coroner's inquest revealed that the design of the latter, with its stepped downstream face, served as a model for St. Francis Dam.

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> the design of the cross section profile of the design, with certain limitations.[30] The dam was designed between Mr. Mulholland and myself. Mr. Mulholland set the radius, picked the site, he picked the abutments. We made one or two little changes upstream to get a radial bond.
>
> Q. Mr. Mulholland visited the site?
>
> A. Picked it, considered it suitable for a dam.
>
> Q. And that would be the place to put a dam, said, "I want you to draw me the plans and specifications for a gravity dam."?
>
> A. No, no specifications were written, it was to be done by the department itself, certain dimensions to follow.[31]

Further underscoring Mulholland's overall authority was William Hurlburt, the office engineer involved with the design of St. Francis Dam.

> Q. [By the coroner]: Now who designed the St. Francis Dam? Did you [Hurlbut] design it?
>
> A. I did not.
>
> Q. Did Mr. Mulholland design it?
>
> A. It was designed under his instructions.
>
> Q. Then, am I to understand that Mr. Mulholland designed the St. Francis Dam?
>
> A. It was designed under his instructions.[32]

Not content with Hurlbut's responses, a deputy district attorney took over the questioning and doggedly pursued the nature of the design process, Mulholland's role in it, and the relationship between the designs for the Hollywood and St. Francis dams:

> Q. [The deputy district attorney]: Do I get this correct: Is this the information you are trying to give the Coroner: that Mr. Mulholland designed the Hollywood Dam, that is, he said that he wanted a dam over there?
>
> A. [Hurlburt]: He [Mulholland] gave instructions for a [Hollywood] dam to be designed with a gravity type section, according to the best engineering practice and it was assigned to Mr. Bayley to do that.
>
> Q. And Mr. Bayley had prepared the blue prints in accordance with Mr. Mulholland's request for a dam?
>
> A. He prepared studies in connection with that, and, as a result the drawings were made.
>
> Q. And, then, when they wanted the St. Francis Dam, they got out the old drawings of the Hollywood and revamped them under your [Hurlbut's] instructions and sent them up there?
>
> A. They got out the computations and the studies on the Hollywood Dam, and the matter was gone into with Mr. Mulholland and others at that time.[33]

Apparently satisfied, the deputy district attorney and other questioners turned to different issues. But despite a seeming desire to uncover the origins of the St. Francis design, participants in the coroner's inquest failed to investigate a critically important aspect of the dam's history: In what way did the design change during the construction process?

The exact dimensions of the dam built at St. Francis are now difficult to ascertain because of changes made during construction and because the precise nature of these changes was never reliably documented. In the wake of the collapse,

FACING PAGE: *Looking west across partially completed St. Francis Dam in July 1925. Buckets of wet concrete were hoisted up the wooden tower (center left) and then dumped into the tops of lengthy chutes. The chutes carried the concrete down to the specific part of the dam where construction was underway. This view illustrates that the structure was built as a monolith rather than—as was done with many other large gravity dams of the era—in discrete vertical sections separated by "expansion joints" spaced approximately fifty feet apart. The view documents the absence of drainage pipes along the length of the upstream face. And it reveals that only minimal excavation of the abutment foundations was carried out prior to the pouring of concrete.*

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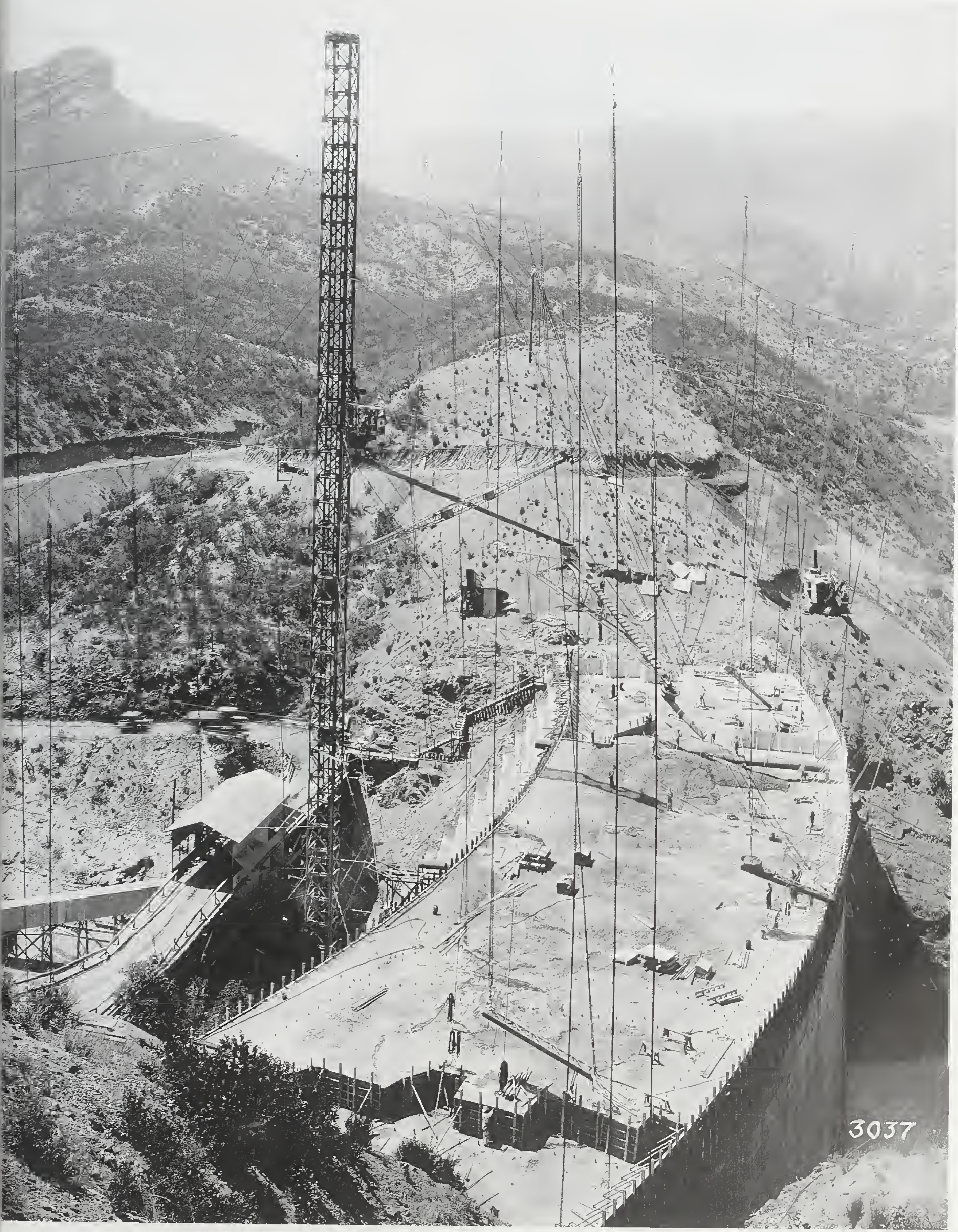
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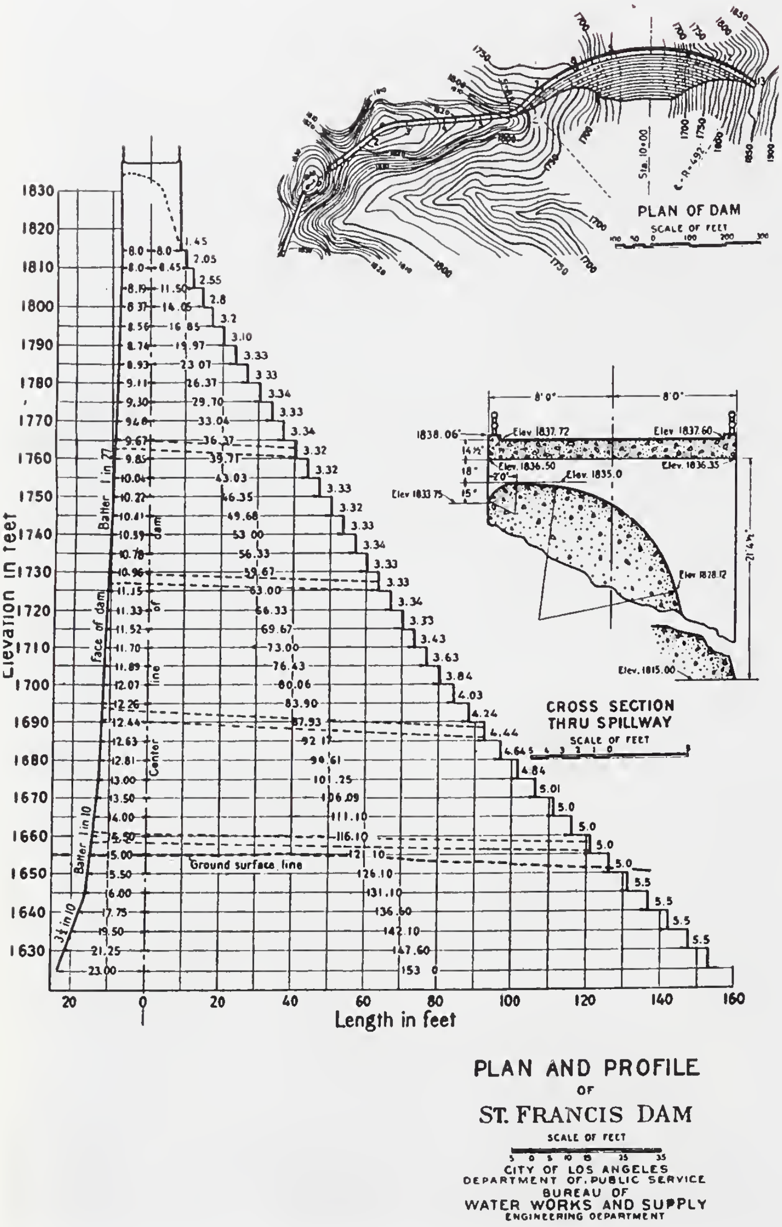

PLAN OF DAM
SCALE OF FEET
CROSS SECTION THRU SPILLWAY
SCALE OF FEET
Elev 1837.72
Elev 1837.60
Elev 1836.50
Elev 1836.35
Elev 1835.0
Elev 1833.75
Elev 1828.12
Elev. 1815.00
Elevation in feet
Length in feet
Face of dam
Center line of dam
Batter 1 in 77
Batter 1 in 10
Ground surface line
PLAN AND PROFILE
OF
ST. FRANCIS DAM
SCALE OF FEET
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE
BUREAU OF
WATER WORKS AND SUPPLY
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Above: *The "official" cross-sectional profile of St. Francis Dam as publicized by the Los Angeles Bureau of Water Works and Supply after the failure. Charles Outland's later comparison of this drawing with construction photos revealed that a significant portion of the dam's downstream "toe" had been omitted during construction, thus exacerbating the instability of the structure.*

Report, Governor's Commission, Plate 4

Mulholland and his staff distributed a drawing indicating a maximum height of 205 feet (extending from the deepest foundations at 1,630 feet above sea level to 1,835 feet at the spillway crest) and a maximum base width of 175 feet (this contrasted with a published report in 1926 indicating a maximum thickness of 169 feet).[34] A commission appointed by the California governor to investigate the disaster published this drawing in its report. For many years it was accepted as accurately documenting what would have been a very amply proportioned cross-section for the design. However, Charles Outland's subsequent research in the early 1960s revealed that the dam was significantly thinner at the base than the official drawing indicated.

In studying construction photographs, Outland discovered that the dam's base was about twenty feet less thick than indicated in the supposed "as-built" drawings. Moreover, in analyzing a series of pronouncements made by the city describing the size of the reservoir during the years 1923–1925, he discerned that the city had gradually increased the reservoir size. Specifically, in July 1923 the city publicized the size at 30,000 acre-feet, and a year later—shortly before concrete was poured—at 32,000 acre-feet. Then in March 1925 the reservoir capacity was reported

Facing page, top: *Looking toward the east abutment, summer 1925. In the left-center background, note the shallow excavation extending into the abutment and the lack of a cutoff trench near the upstream face.*

Henry E. Huntington Library, Courtney Collection

Facing page, bottom: *Spring 1927 view looking north across the almost-filled St. Francis Reservoir. This is a rare surviving image that focuses on the immense body of water impounded behind the dam. While the high-heeled model brought to the dam to pose for the Automobile Club of Southern California's photographer may appear out of place in such a prosaic setting, the photograph does help highlight how water stored in the reservoir was destined not to irrigate lemon groves in the Santa Clara Valley but, rather, to nourish the burgeoning municipality of Los Angeles.*

Automobile Club of Southern California

as 38,000 acre-feet (equivalent to about 11 billion gallons). In the abstract, raising the dam's height was not necessarily dangerous, but to fully assure safety, the base width would also need to be increased. The photographic evidence revealed that such a compensating increase had not occurred and that, in Outland's words, "the dam had been born with a stub toe."[35] Exactly what transpired on-site during construction of the dam will never be known, but little doubt exists that Mulholland chose to increase the reservoir capacity in a way that did not retain the dam's original height-to-width ratio. In so doing, he reduced the dam's stability and made it more vulnerable to the effect of uplift.

During construction, Mulholland incorporated few features into the design that would mitigate the effect of uplift. Across a distance of about 120 feet in the center of the dam site, he placed ten drainage wells. But for the remainder of the 600-foot long main section of the dam he did not grout the foundation, excavate a cut-off trench, or install a drainage system up the sides of the canyon walls. In concert with the raised height of the design, these omissions would prove to be fatal flaws.

Clearing of the dam site began in the fall of 1923, but the first concrete was not poured until August 1924. Construction proceeded for close to two years until the dam topped out in May 1926. After completion, the reservoir was not immediately filled, although it did come to within three feet of the spillway in May 1927. Nine months later, in February 1928, the water level came to within a foot of the spillway and, on March 7, 1928, the reservoir reached three inches below the spillway crest. It stayed at that elevation until late in the evening of March 12.[36] Then disaster struck.

THE INVESTIGATORS

The collapse of St. Francis Dam prompted the creation of several panels of engineers and geologists (sponsored by the California governor, the Los Angeles County district attorney, the Los Angeles County coroner, and the Los Angeles City Council, among others) to investigate the cause of the disaster.[37] Although the panels were not in unanimous agreement on all points, most quickly—perhaps hastily would be a better term—concluded that the collapse began in the red sandstone conglomerate beneath the western abutment. A new leak on the west abutment (others had been noted earlier) had been discovered on the morning of the day when the dam collapsed. As a result, Mulholland visited the dam less than eighteen hours before the collapse, but pronounced the leak not dangerous and felt no need to warn communities downstream of possible problems.[38]

Following the disaster, the governor's commission—responsible for a widely distributed report—and most other investigators perceived this new leak as comprising the key to understanding the collapse. The commission, it should be noted, believed that "the foundation under the entire dam left very much to be desired," but the west end emerged as the culprit. "The west end," stated the governor's commission, "was founded upon a reddish conglomerate which, even when dry, was of decidedly inferior strength and which, when wet[,] became so soft that most of it lost almost all rock characteristics." The softening of this "reddish conglomerate" undermined the west side. "The rush of water released by failure of the west end caused a heavy scour against the easterly canyon wall . . . and caused the failure of that part of the structure." There then "quickly followed . . . the collapse of large sections of the dam." The committee engaged by the city council concurred in ascribing the cause of the collapse to "defective foundations," with the failure "apparently" beginning in the "red conglomerate," but nonetheless acknowledged that "the sequence of failure is uncertain."[39]

The governor's commission and the City Council committee reached their conclusions within a week after initiating study of the failure (and less than two weeks after the collapse). Such haste produced no doubts. "With such a formation [the red conglomerate]," concluded the governor's commission, "the ultimate failure of this dam was inevitable, unless water could have been kept from reaching the foundation. Inspection galleries, pressure grouting, drainage wells and deep cut-off walls are commonly used to prevent or remove percolation, but it is improbable that any or all of these devices would have been adequately effective, though they would have ameliorated the conditions and postponed the final failure." As far as the commission was concerned, the poor quality of the foundation material on the west side of the canyon (and "defective foundations" generally) rendered all other issues—including uplift—irrelevant.[40]

On March 21, 1928, Los Angeles County convened a public coroner's inquest into the tragedy in which sixty-six people testified. Most appeared only once but some (including Mulholland) were recalled several times. On April 12 the coroner's jury issued its judgment on the dam's collapse.[41]

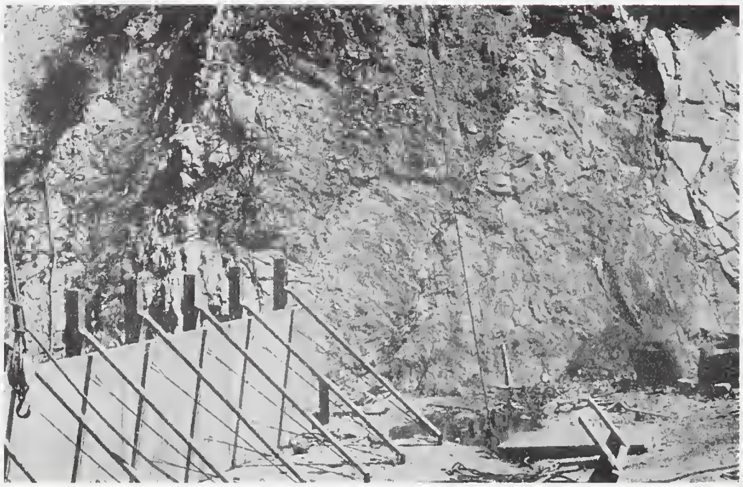
"After carefully weighing all the evidence," concluded the jurors, the dam failed for two fundamental reasons: "an error in engineering judgment" and "an error in regard to fundamental policy relating to public safety." The first error consisted of building the dam on defective "rock formations." Compounding these foundation problems was a dam "design . . . not suited to [the] inferior foundation conditions"—a design that, among other flaws, did not carry the dam "far enough into the bedrock" and that lacked precautions against uplift, such as "cutoff walls," "pressure grouting of the bedrock," and "inspection tunnels with drainage pipes" (except for "the center section"). The "responsibility" for these lapses in engineering judgment, stated the jurors, "rests upon the Bureau of Water Works and Supply, and the Chief Engineer thereof."[42] As for the error in public policy, the jurors laid that at the feet of "those to whom the Chief Engineer is subservient"—"the Department of Water and Power Commissioners, the legislative bodies of city and state, and to the public at large." If these groups had insisted on "proper safeguards . . . making it impossible for excessive responsibility to be delegated to or assumed by any one individual in matters involving great menaces to public safety, it is unlikely that the engineering error would have escaped detection and produced a great disaster."[43]

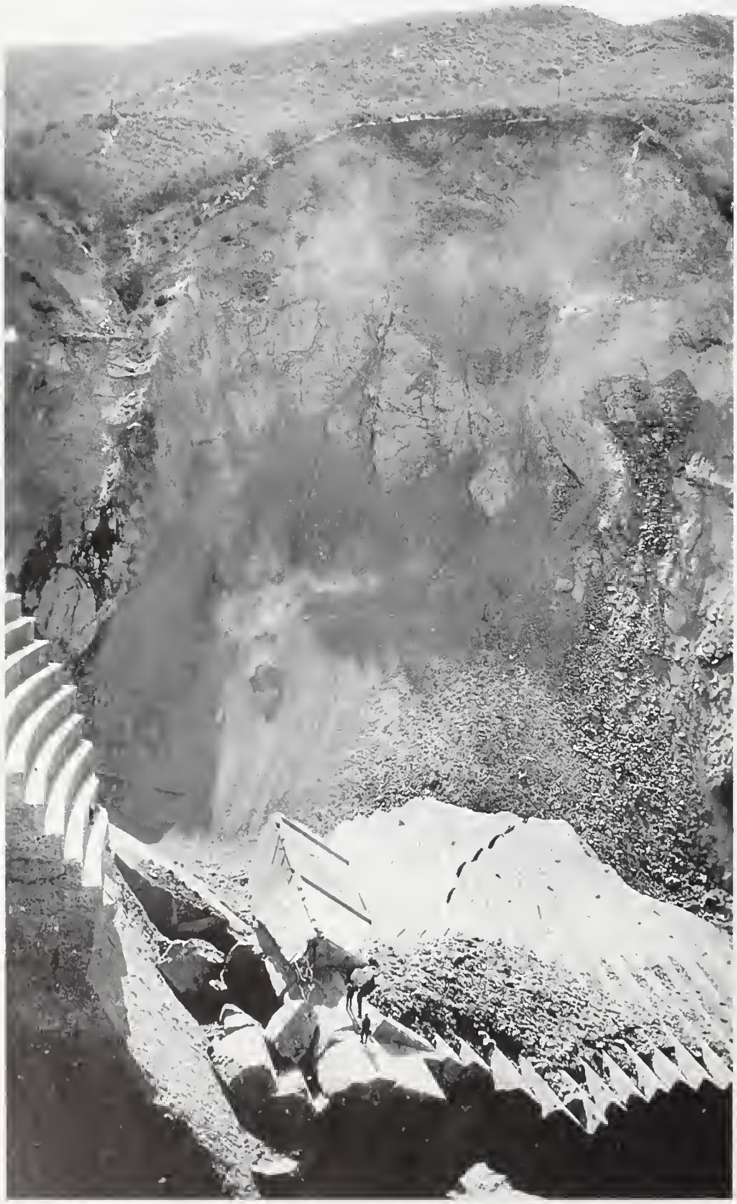
In their verdict, the jurors opined that the dam likely collapsed first on the red conglomerate/ west side because a "preponderance of expert opinion favors the conclusion." Nonetheless, they expressed ambivalence about this judgment—they had heard testimony that the schist forming the east abutment was "a weak material, badly shattered, very susceptible to seepage of water, and to slippage along the planes of cleavage"—and hesitated to conclude that they fully understood "the exact sequence" of when and how the collapse occurred.[44]

A key reason for the jurors' ambivalence can be traced to the testimony of one of the last witnesses called before them. Halbert P. Gillette, president and editor of the journal *Water Works*, was decidedly unimpressed with reasoning that blamed the dam's failure on the softened red conglomerate at the western abutment—and he forcefully testified at the coroner's inquest on that point.[45] Soon after the inquest's conclusion he publicly aired his critique of the three seemingly official investigating committees—the governor's commission, the Los Angeles City Council committee, and the Los Angeles district attorney's committee. Declining to criticize Mulholland or the dam design, Gillette lambasted the investigating teams for hasty and faulty research and for concluding that the dam failed first on the west side. He also found no evidence to support the rumor of an explosion bringing the dam down (growing out of earlier dynamitings of the Los Angeles Aqueduct), but he did not discount the possibility of an earthquake playing a role.[46] Based upon his own field work and research (which convinced him that the red conglomerate was hardly as weak as publicly portrayed), he analyzed how the dam's fragments were distributed downstream and also analyzed data from triangulation surveys. Averring that "the schist on the east bank dips into the canyon in such a way that a slide could occur; and no one denies that slides of the schist did occur on such a scale as to destroy the east side of the dam," he convincingly demonstrated that the mechanics of an east abutment/first collapse sequence were the only ones to make sense of post-failure conditions at the site.[47]

Support for Gillette's contention that the schist on the east side failed first came from Charles H. Lee, a San Francisco hydraulic engineer retained as a consultant by the Los Angeles Bureau of Power and Light. In public lectures and an article published in June 1928 in *Western Construction News*, Lee concluded that "the immediate cause of failure" was "a slide at the east abutment." Unlike Gillette, however, he claimed that the subsequent collapse of the west abutment was "quite possibl[y] . . . a contributing . . . cause of failure." He also noted the possibility that these actions were accompanied by "uplift beneath the dam . . . being sufficient to produce cracking and failure." Lee dismissed with no comment the likelihood of an explosion or earthquake bringing down the dam.[48]

The most insightful and persuasive investigative reports on the mechanics of the St. Francis Dam collapse came from civil engineers Carl E. Grunsky and his son E. L. Grunsky and Stanford University geologist Bailey Willis. The elder Grunsky had gained prominence serving as the first San Francisco city engineer, a member of the Panama Canal Commission, a consulting engineer for the U.S. Reclamation Service, and in 1922 as president of the American Society of Civil Engineers. He also studied water-supply issues on behalf of farmers along the Santa Clara River (the major conduit for floodwaters coursing from the collapsed St. Francis Dam). His son, E. L. Grunsky, after acquiring an engineering education, worked with his father as a consulting engineer. Bailey Willis, with degrees in mining and civil engineering as well as "geological studies . . . directed primarily to the mechanical problems of rock structures," had accumulated a half century of engineering and geological experience in the United States and South America, including service as a geologist with the U.S.





Geological Survey and, most recently, as a professor of geology at Stanford University. Such qualifications (bolstered by the Santa Clara Water Conservancy District's existing professional relationship with Carl Grunsky) prompted the district to hire the Grunskys and Willis to investigate the dam collapse.[49]

Their investigations culminated in two reports (one by the Grunskys and the other by Willis) completed in April 1928. Willis's "conclusions and our own," observed Carl Grunsky, "were reached independently" and "are in substantial agreement." Both reports were subsequently published in *Western Construction News*, the Grunskys' in May 1928 and Willis's a month later.[50] In retrospect, the Grunskys and Willis

TOP: *Construction view published by the Governor's Commission highlighting the fractured "schist" forming the east canyon wall. The dam's up-stream face is to the left, and the lack of a cut-off trench to help "key" the structure into the foundation is clearly evident. Moreover, no drainage pipes or wells were placed in this part of the structure. The wooden panels on the left comprise the "formwork" that held the wet concrete in place as it hardened.*

REPORT GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION, P. 47

LEFT: *Looking east across the dam site toward the east canyon wall, location of a huge landslide. The piece of the dam shown on page 8 appears in the foreground. Engineer Carl Grunsky and his son quickly perceived that the collapse was initiated at the east end of the dam and published their findings in May 1928 in* Western Construction News. *Halbert P. Gillette also recognized the logical impossibilities of the "west side first" failure theory and wrote a compelling critique published in* Water Works *in May 1928.*

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demonstrated greater technical knowledge of the dam site and possessed keener analytical skills than any of the other investigators. Their efforts led to the identification of four major factors that, in combination, led to the disaster:

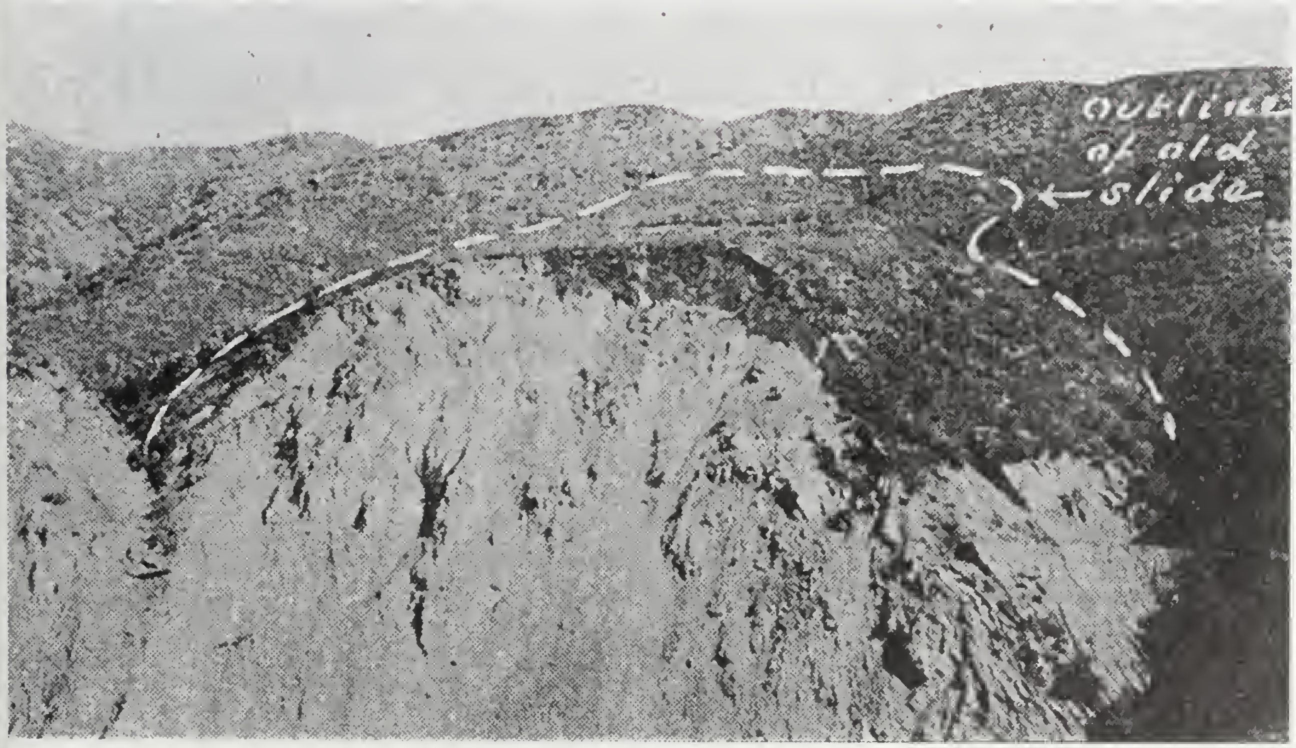
1) ***Unsuitability of the Foundation***: Foundations on both sides of the dam were deemed unsuitable, "but the critical situation developed more rapidly in the east abutment" where "the schist is . . . traversed by innumerable minute fissures, into which water would intrude under pressure and by capillary action."

2) ***Old Landslide***: The "east abutment was located on . . . the end of an old landslide."

3) ***Uplift and Collapse***: "When it [the old landslide] had become soaked by the water standing in the reservoir against its lower portion, it became active and moved." That movement resulted from "a great hydrostatic force under its [the dam's] foundation surface from end to end," which triggered the collapse of the east abutment.

4) ***Inadequate Design***: "The old slide against which the dam rested at the east . . . offered only insecure support to the dam, and this was rendered more precarious by the [dam builders'] adoption of a design which did not include adequate foundation drainage."[51]

Willis, as the geologist on this investigative team, most likely discovered the "old slide" (his report discussed it at the greater length and the Grunskys



In the aftermath of the disaster, geologist Bailey Willis recognized the existence of an "old slide" of schist that was reactivated by water seeping into the east canyon wall. In text superimposed over this photograph published in Western Construction News, *Willis called specific attention to the "outline of the old slide."*

WESTERN CONSTRUCTION NEWS, JUNE 25, 1928 drew liberally on that discussion as well as on his analysis of the schist in their report). On the other hand, the Grunskys, as civil engineers, took the lead in describing the role played by "uplift," a condition of great concern to prudent dam builders of the era.

The Grunskys expressed surprise that "no measures . . . have been noted, which would have reduced percolation into the hillside material under the dam." They also emphasized precautions that could have been implemented to combat uplift, such as "thorough hillside and foundation drainage . . . fortified with deep cut-off walls along or near the up-stream face." As a result, "at a full reservoir there was a great hydrostatic force under its [the dam's] foundation surface from end to end, relieved but slightly by a few weep-holes [located in the center of the canyon]. This hydrostatic pressure, the uplifting force of the swelling red sandstone at the west, and the horizontal and uplifting pressure of the slide at the east, lifted the dam . . . [and] broke it from its foundation."[52]

In early June 1928, the reports of the Grunskys and Willis were synopsized in the nationally dis-

The Hoover (Boulder) Dam shortly after completion in the mid-1930s. Built under the authority of the federal Boulder Canyon Project Act (aka "The Swing-Johnson Bill"). A key benefactor of the proposed dam would be the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, a regional authority subordinate at the time to the political will of Los Angeles. Mulholland played an essential role in designing the district's Colorado River Aqueduct that would depend upon the Hoover (Boulder) Dam for water storage and for hydroelectric power (necessary to operate the system's huge pumps). After a long struggle, proponents of the Boulder Canyon Project Bill anticipated that it would be enacted by Congress in the spring of 1928. The collapse of St. Francis Dam came at a very inopportune time for these proponents and congressional approval of the project did not come until December 1928, a month after Mulholland resigned from the city's Bureau of Water Works and Supply.

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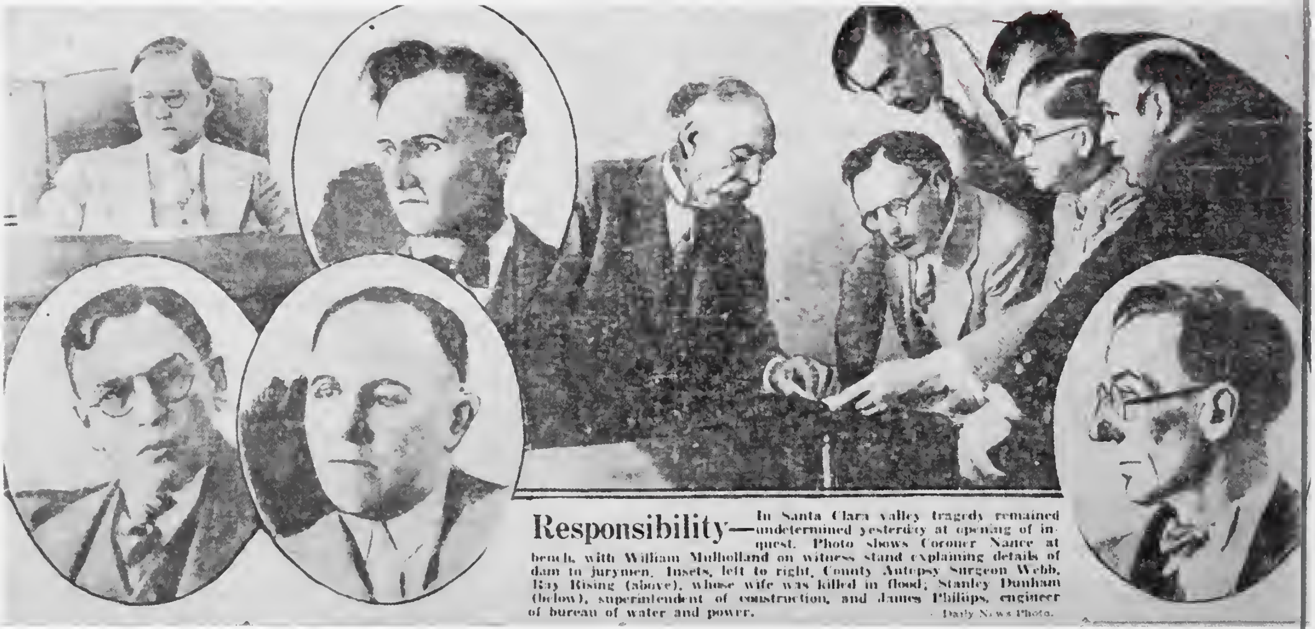
tributed *Engineering News-Record* under the headline "Sixth Report on St. Francis Dam Offers New Theories." This synopsis noted how the Grunksys had tied the failure of the east abutment to uplift and included Willis's description of the "old slide" on the "lower portion" of that abutment which "became active and moved." Except for an editorial article accompanying the synopsis that attempted unsuccessfully to reconcile the Grunskys/Willis reports with the investigative teams that posited a "red conglomerate/west side" failure mode, little public discussion or debate about the Grunskys/Willis findings subsequently appeared in the engineering press. Instead, the views of the governor's commission and others that ascribed the failure to the western abutment's conglomerate—and more generally to "defective foundations"—largely predominated prior to publication of Outland's book.[53] All of which raises the intriguing question: "Why?"

Given the explanatory power of the east side/uplift failure hypothesis, why did the investigating committees that quickly posited a "west side first" collapse theory decline to reconcile such findings with the analysis of the Grunskys, Willis, Gillette, and Lee? Outland insightfully answered such a question when he linked the St. Francis failure to the Boulder Canyon Project (or Swing-Johnson), Bill that was due for a vote in Congress in the spring of 1928. As Outland observed: "A worried, water-short southern California looked askance upon a proposed dam that would store seven hundred times more water than the late reservoir in San Francisquito Canyon. If Boulder Dam was to become a reality, this fear would have to be eased and quickly." Congressman Phil Swing, the principal advocate of the dam in Washington, D.C., felt the political heat and counseled the Boulder Dam Association to find ways of advocating the efficacy of high dams "without tying [St. Francis] too closely to [the] Boulder Dam project." And Arizona Governor George W.P. Hunt—a tenacious opponent of Boulder Dam—publicly connected that project with the St. Francis failure. "Governor Hunt knew a good thing when he saw it," observed Outland. "The truth of the matter was that the engineering world had been shaken, far more than it cared to admit, by the sudden catastrophe."[54]

Because of Mulholland's public association with the Boulder Canyon Project—he had testified before Congress in support of Boulder Dam in 1924, had taken a well-publicized trip down the Colorado River in 1925, and had traveled to Washington, D.C., in January 1928 to lobby for the bill—the Bureau of Reclamation had good reason to ease public disquiet concerning the curved gravity dam technology used at St. Francis.[55] Because of its precarious financial situation in the 1920s, the agency had much (besides prestige) riding on congressional approval for the proposed Boulder Dam.[56] Perhaps not coincidently, many engineers in the agency's employ, or closely associated with it as consultants, agreed to help investigate the St. Francis disaster. There was, in particular, A. J. Wiley, chairman of the bureau's Boulder Dam Board of consulting engineers, who served as chairman of the governor's commission and Elwood Mead, bureau commissioner and hence the agency's highest ranking official, who served as chairman of the City Council committee.[57]

The uncertain fate of the Boulder Canyon Project (not resolved until December 1928) most plausibly explains why these engineers—and other proponents of gravity-dam technology—evinced no interest in keeping the St. Francis Dam disaster in the public eye any longer than absolutely necessary. It also explains why they had no interest in modifying their conclusions after the Grunskys, Willis, Gillette, and Lee presented compelling critiques of the "west abutment failed first" theory. Finally, it helps explain why the governor's commission, a mere two weeks after the disaster, took pains to assure the public that "there is nothing in the failure . . . to indicate that the accepted theory of gravity dam design is in error . . . [or that] such a dam may [not] properly be deemed to be among the most durable of all man-made structures."[58]



Responsibility—In Santa Clara valley tragedy remained undetermined yesterday at opening of inquest. Photo shows Coroner Nance at bench, with William Mulholland on witness stand explaining details of dam to jurymen. Insets, left to right, County Autopsy Surgeon Webb, Ray Rising (above), whose wife was killed in flood; Stanley Dunham (below), superintendent of construction, and James Philips, engineer of bureau of water and power. Daily News Photo.

Newspaper illustration depicting Mulholland's testimony at the Coroner's Inquest.

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MULHOLLAND AND THE CORONER'S INQUEST

Though none of the investigative reports exonerated Mulholland, he was publicly hailed in the engineering press as a "big man" for his seeming forthrightness in accepting responsibility at the Los Angeles County coroner's inquest: "Don't blame anybody else, you just fasten it on me. If there is an error of human judgment, I was the human."[59] That acknowledgement did not come without reservations.

"We overlooked something here," Mulholland testified at the coroner's inquest in March 1928, but he never indicated what it might have been. Twice he seemed on the verge of offering an explanation—"I have a very strong opinion myself as to what was the approximate cause of that failure"; "I have a suspicion, and I don't want to divulge it"—but he backed off when invited by the coroner "to tell us." He may have believed that sabotage—similar to the dynamite attacks carried out against the Los Angeles Aqueduct by Owens Valley vigilantes in 1924, 1926, and 1927—caused the collapse. But, aside from a vague reference to the site being "vulnerable against human ag[g]ression" in his coroner's inquest testimony, there is no evidence to direc ly support such a supposition.[60] Regardless of what Mulholland may have thought to be the cause of the collapse, his granddaughter later insisted that, "in accepting responsibility, he di not thereby consider himself to blame for som thing that had occurred beyond his power."[61] B "blame," of course, was precisely the word that he applied to himself. A telling commentary o Mulholland's conception of "blame" emerges from the transcript of the coroner's inquest.

Acknowledging no engineering or geological r son for the St. Francis Dam collapse, Mulholla did conjure the possibility of psychic or supernatural forces. He would not build another da "in the same place," he told the coroner, becau it was haunted by a spirit opposed to human v lation of the area. "There is a hoodoo on it." "A hoodoo?" asked the surprised coroner. "Yes," replied Mulholland, "it is vulnerable agains human ag[g]ression, and I would not build it there." "You don't mean [to say] that because i [the dam] went out on the morning of the 13th

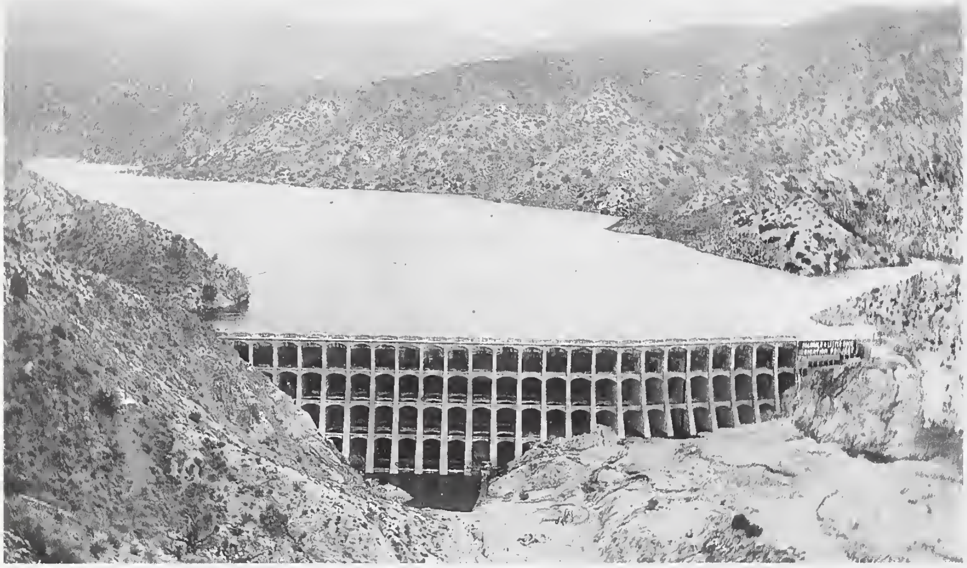
"Perhaps that," answered Mulholland, "but that is an additional hazard. I had not thought of that."[62] The coroner's jury quickly dropped the subject, leaving only conjecture as to what Mulholland meant by "a hoodoo" (and "human aggression," for that matter). But clearly the exchange did little to bolster confidence in his scientific or technical judgments.

No less disconcerting was Mulholland's assertion at the inquest that he had secured an outside inspection of the St. Francis Dam project similar to the state supervision mandated by the 1917 dam-safety law. "You had no inspection of the site by any state authority?" asked the coroner. "Yes sir," countered Mulholland, "the State Engineer [Wilbur F. McClure] examined the site, examined it carefully." This prompted a quizzical response from the coroner: "You are not required to have state inspection?" "No sir," replied Mulholland, "not with us, we are not required to." "Why did you call for state inspection when you didn't require it?" asked the coroner. "I am not a strict caviler about the law," responded Mulholland. "I like to comply as far as I can and go over the mark in conformity to the law, recognize there ought to be state inspection of such things, whether it is a municipality or not."[63]

At this point a member of the coroner's jury interrupted with a question that elicited a response which, even on its face, questioned Mulholland's claim that McClure's inspection had gone "over the mark in conformity to the law": "How much time did Mr. McClure spend?" asked the juror. "Didn't spend but half a day," answered Mulholland, "and he saw all there was to see in half a day, because there wasn't much to see." Moreover, in McClure's company "my men went around there, stumbled around there over the country."[64] The coroner intervened: "He didn't make any geological test?" "Don't know what you call it," replied Mulholland, "[he] looked [at the site] as I did, exposed rock . . . . I don't really know if he is a geologist or not." "Did he come at your request," asked the coroner, whose question immediately prompted a juror's follow-up question before Mulholland could respond: "With the specific object of examining the dam?" "Precisely," said Mulholland. "I don't like to be stubborn about things, I wouldn't think of telling him it was none of his business, I did insist it was his business." "Did Mr. McClure see the finished work?" asked the juror. "I think he has," answered Mulholland, "pretty sure he has been down here several times while they were working on it." In the midst of these questions and responses, Mulholland made an admission about his policy on consultants that came closer to the mark. "In general, for the last ten or twelve years, I haven't consulted with anybody, or but very few."[65]

Though Mulholland and his questioners speak as if McClure is alive, he had, in fact, been dead almost two years, having passed away in June 1926. Moreover, Mulholland's remarks leave unclear whether he was actually at the dam site during McClure's visit. His reference to the occasion is remarkably vague: "I think there was some little excavation, and my men went around there, stumbled around there over the country, and never had a word to say about it." Nor does the testimony reveal whether Mulholland ever talked with McClure about his visit.[66] Most importantly, Mulholland's description of McClure's actions offers scant support for any assertion that he had called for a "state inspection" going "over the mark in conformity to the law." Particularly untenable is the notion that the State Engineer's half day visit might constitute a substantive review comparable with those undertaken under formal authority of the 1917 dam-safety law.

For example, consider the review given to Littlerock Dam located only thirty-five miles east of the St. Francis site. This reinforced-concrete multiple-arch dam was built by the Littlerock Creek and Palmdale Irrigation Districts in 1922–1924 and—in stark contrast to the privilege afforded the city of Los Angeles—the farmers in these districts could not build their dam until obtaining explicit approval from the State Engineer. The approval process for the Littlerock Dam stretched over four years, beginning in 1918.



Aerial view looking down on Littlerock Dam in the San Gabriel Mountains o northern Los Angeles County, circa 1930. St. Francis Dam was located onl about thirty-five miles to the west, but it was a world away in terms of the scrutiny given to its design and construction by the California State Engineer. Built jointly by the Littlerock Creek Irrigation District and the Palm dale Irrigation District in 1922-1924, the Littlerock Dam received no privileg of exemption from the 1917 dam-safety law. Instead, the design-approval proces went on for more than four years befor State Engineer Wilbur F. McClure allowed construction to begin.

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During that time State Engineer McClure engaged three outside engineers to review plans with his staff. He also called upon the advice of Joseph B. Lippincott, consulting engineer for the bond house that was to finance construction.[67]

McClure approved the plans for Littlerock Dam in May 1922. The following August his representative visited the site and noted that slight adjustments were being made by the contractor. He quickly reported to McClure that the contractor had been told to "suspend operations . . . until the changed plans were submitted to the State Department of Engineering and Irrigation for approval and action thereon." In addition, the contractor was informed "that the foundation would have to be cleared, viewed, and passed as satisfactory by a representative of the State Engineer before the actual construction of the dam could commence."[68] Two more site visits took place before McClure granted final design approval on November 4, 1922. Thereafter, a representative of the State Engineer visited the site regularly and reported on construction progress. Formal acceptance of the completed Littlerock Dam was made in a letter from McClure to the Littlerock Creek Irrigation District on June 5, 1924.[69]

Clearly, it would be specious to equate a half day's "stumbling around" at the St. Francis site with the authority exercised by the State Engineer over the Littlerock Dam. Mulholland's venture in obfuscation also contrasts sharply with the more forthright testimony given to the coroner by his chief assistant, Harvey Van Norman. "Do you know of any independent geologists or engineers who were called in consultation with regard to the selection of that site?" asked the coroner. "No, I don't," replied Van Norman."[70]

Instead of targeting Mulholland, post-collapse criticism generally focused on a legal system—specifically, the 1917 dam-safety statute—that allowed him to build St. Francis Dam without substantive outside review. Compounding that loophole was Mulholland's heroic stature among Los Angeles authorities who viewed him, in the words of the coroner's jury, as possessing "infallibility in matters of engineering judgment." With enactment of a new California dam-safety law in 1929 that eliminated the municipal exemption and with Mulholland's seeming willingness to accept responsibility for the disaster, the causes of and responsibility for the St. Francis collapse soon passed beyond the realm of overt debate or thoughtful reflection.[71] Things would not change until publication of Outland's book.

OUTLAND AND MULHOLLAND

In 1963 Charles F. Outland's *Man-Made Disaster* brought the tragedy back into the public eye.[72] Neither wild-eyed conspiracy fanatic nor Mulholland-hater, Outland resisted temptation to moralize or render judgment on emotional grounds. Interviewing as many witnesses as he could locate and examining many volumes of published and unpublished materials, he described how the dam came to be built, carefully documented the effect of the flood as it passed through the Santa Clara Valley in the pre-dawn hours of March 13, and analyzed the inquests and investigations that sought to discern the cause of the collapse. While evidence amassed by others, especially Willis and the Grunskys, informed his views, he did not simply parrot their findings.[73] Moreover, unlike the public pronouncements of earlier investigators, he assigned responsibility for its occurrence to more than weak foundations or to a legal system that allowed an individual to design and build a dam without outside review.

Like the Grunskys, Willis, Gillette, and Lee, Outland concluded that the dam collapsed first on the east side. "Ever since completion of the dam," observed Outland, "suspicious eyes had watched a leak on the western abutment, while all the time the real villain lurked seven hundred feet away in the mountain of schist." This was not to say that Outland believed the western abutment was a pillar of stability, for he considered it an "admittedly wet conglomerate" and unsuitable as a dam foundation. The east abutment, however, consisted of faulty schist at the point of contact with the dam and was vulnerable to saturation and the destabilizing effect of uplift.[74] Outland fixated on this schist—the "mountain of schist"—and insisted it was the "real villain."[75]

In actuality, Outland identified two villains—the schist and William Mulholland. Unlike the early investigators who focused on detailing the causes, mechanics, and sequence of the St. Francis Dam failure and said nothing about personal blame, Outland unhesitatingly named Mulholland the key figure in the tragedy: "In the final analysis, . . . the responsibility was his alone."[76] That appraisal in part derived from Outland's discovery of a report sent by Mulholland in 1911 to the Los Angeles Board of Public Works. While seeking a route for the Los Angeles Aqueduct, Mulholland and Lippincott (as noted earlier in this essay) encountered unstable, fractured schist within the east canyon wall of what would become the future site of St. Francis Dam. That discovery prompted a decision to avoid the faulty rock by locating "the [aqueduct] line . . . well back under the mountain" in a tunnel. "No one," stated Outland in *Man-Made Disaster*, "had seriously questioned the stability of the east abutment except the Chief, himself, at the time the aqueduct was being built many years before."[77] While Mulholland took precautions in 1911 to protect the long-term integrity of the aqueduct as it ran the length of San Francisquito Canyon, no comparable caution was evident when he later built the dam. Outland did not speculate on Mulholland's reason for this—and in later years the "Chief" offered no explanation of his own—but there was no doubt in Outland's mind that Mulholland should have been aware of the danger posed by the faulty schist forming the east canyon wall. "Construction photographs," noted Outland, "clearly record the fractural nature of the schist. . . . Unfortunately, it was so badly laminated that when stress was applied parallel to these lines of cleavage, it had little resistance to slippage. The east abutment of the dam possessed the strength of a deck of cards that is pushed obliquely on the table."[78]

An examination of construction photographs also played a critical role in Outland's discovery that "the dam had been born with a stub toe" and featured a base thickness about twenty feet less than indicated in design drawings. However, Outland downplayed this discovery by claiming that "Changes in plans after construction has started are nothing new or unique to the engineering profession [and] unforeseen contingencies often require modifications of the original designs."[79] Had the thickness of the base been properly proportioned in relation to the increased height, Outland's sanguinity would have been appropriate. A "stub toe" profile for an enlarged gravity dam, however, represented a far different —and much more dangerous—state of affairs. Although Outland did not appreciate the safety implications of the "stub toe" profile, his perceptive comparison of design drawings and construction photographs comprised a very significant finding that speaks directly to the cause of the St. Francis Dam collapse.

ROGERS AND MULHOLLAND

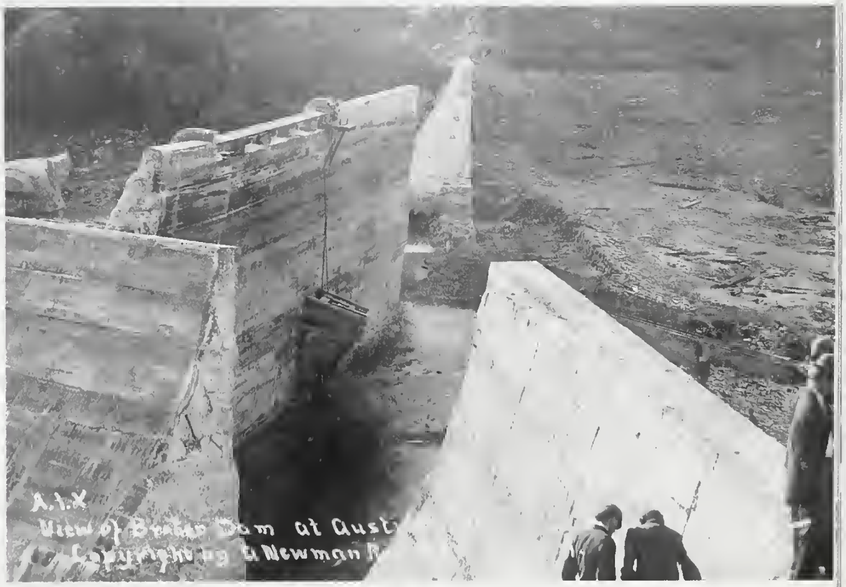
Matters largely rested with Outland's book until 1992 when geologist J. David Rogers published an article in *Engineering Geology Practice in Southern California*. Three years later he reached a wider audience by republishing that paper in the *Southern California Quarterly* in an expanded format but one essentially unchanged in its major arguments. Rogers's findings about the dam's collapse—the unsuitability of the site, the destabilizing effect of uplift acting on the structure, and a failure sequence initiated when water saturation reactivated an "ancient" (Willis had termed it an "old") landslide within the schist of the east abutment—echoed those already documented by the Grunskys and Willis. Given his background as a geologist it is not surprising that Rogers drew special attention to the ancient landslide comprising the site's east abutment. And general readers confronting his analysis might easily infer that such a slide would necessarily render any dam at the site to be unstable. But Rogers actually makes no claim supporting this inference. Instead, his contention—which is essentially what Willis had already reported in 1928—is simply that "the dam failure sequence was brought about by the partial reactivation of the paleomegaslide, within the schist comprising the east abutment."[80]

In a 1997 interview published by the Bureau of Reclamation, Rogers explained: "when ground or rock has slid in a landslide, it dilates or increases in volume [and] that increase in volume sets up a whole bunch of cracks, and water can go through those cracks quite easily." Thus, while the broken schist in the east abutment at St. Francis certainly made Mulholland's gravity dam more susceptible to the effect of uplift, it did not automatically or inevitably precipitate failure. Rogers specifically notes that "we know now there's over 100 major dams in the United States that have also been built against [ancient landslides]" and acknowledges that "they haven't failed yet . . . [because] the thing keeping those dams in place is the inherent redundancies of their design[s]."[81] In essence, Rogers affirms that if gravity dams erected atop ancient landslides are conservatively designed—that is, with "inherent redundancies," such as properly proportioned profiles, extensive drainage systems, cut-off walls, grouting, and similar measures—failure is hardly a foregone conclusion. Unfortunately, this affirmation is not something that is widely appreciated in the public arena where, instead, notions of Mulholland's supposed "exoneration" have gained far greater currency.

While Rogers praised *Man-Made Disaster* as a "definitive work," he differs with his predecessor in three important particulars, two of which consisted of criticisms of Mulholland not made by Outland.[82] The first instance was Rogers's censure of Mulholland for his "omission of any outside consultants to review the dam's design," a lapse that Rogers considered a "weak link in Mulholland's design process."[83] Rogers's second criticism of Mulholland dealt with raising the dam's height—accompanied by no compensating change in thickness—after construction commenced. Outland had discovered this while studying construction photographs, but he did not relate such alterations to structural safety. Rogers picked up on this omission, correctly pointing out that, in accord with standard gravity-dam theory dating to the mid-nineteenth century, raising the height was "potentially dangerous . . . in a gravity dam . . . that derives its stability through simple dead weight to resist the force imposed by the reservoir water. . . . Simply put," stated Rogers, "it is dangerous to attempt the heightening of a concrete gravity dam simply by increasing the crest height without a corresponding enlargement of the dam's base." Rogers's diagnosis was on target and he acknowledged that the maximum base width was only about 148 feet and not the 169 feet or 175 feet reported by the city in the 1920s.[84] Nonetheless, he neglected to stress how this egregious lapse in engineering judgment helped to explain the dam's collapse.

While Rogers acknowledged shortcomings of Mulholland that Outland had not perceived, he failed to consider fully: (1) how the St. Francis design compared with gravity-dam design as practiced in the teens and 1920s, especially in regard to measures taken to counter uplift; and (2) Mulholland's experience as a dam builder and the significance of his decision to proceed without outside review. These lacunae are of more than passing interest in the context of Rogers's third difference with Outland: Who, if anyone, was responsible? Outland had unhesitatingly concluded that the "responsibility" was Mulholland's "alone." Rogers not only made no such pronouncement but also roundly criticized the governor's commission—though, strangely, not Outland—for "assigning blame to an individual (Mulholland) in lieu of an organization or profession." To Rogers, fault lay in the ignorance of a profession, not with particular members of that profession. "Mulholland and his Bureau's engineers," stated Rogers, belonged to a "civil engineering community" that "did not completely appreciate or understand the concepts of effective stress and uplift, precepts just then beginning to gain recognition and acceptance." In short, the evidence that had proved compelling to Outland was, according to Rogers, trumped by "larger culprits": the absence of "a proper appreciation of uplift theory" and the need for "incorporation of solid engineering geologic input."[85]

Rogers's criticisms of Mulholland seem altogether appropriate, even if lacking in conviction and a clear appreciation of their larger significance. But Rogers's failure to address Mulholland's knowledge of the scientific civil-engineering practices and literature of his day and his neglect of Mulholland's dam-building record represent serious omissions. They become all the more



TOP: *Aftermath of the dam failure at Austin, Pennsylvania, on September 30, 1911. After visiting the Austin site in October 1911, John R. Freeman and Arthur Powell Davis—two of Mulholland's engineering colleagues who had recently served with him on a consulting board for the Great Western Power Company—recognized the role of uplift in the Austin collapse.*

BOTTOM: *Homes destroyed by the collapsed Austin Dam. More than seventy people died (some early estimates were higher) when the wall of water surged through much of the town only about a mile below the reservoir site. As this photo shows, there was enormous property damage.*

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weighty in light of evidence that Rogers's assertions about uplift are not supported by the historical record.

UPLIFT AND EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY DAM DESIGN

At St. Francis, Mulholland placed ten drainage wells in the dam's foundation at the center of the canyon. In testimony offered at the coroner's inquest, Mulholland indicated that these drainage wells had been located in the streambed of San Francisquito Creek where "the rock was fissured."

> Q. [By a Juror]: Was this dam [St. Francis] under-drained practically for its entire distance?
>
> A. [Mulholland]: No, it was only where the rock was fissured, that is, those igneous rocks are always more or less jointed a little bit, and we find it usually and always expedient to drain them out so there will not be any up-pressure, taking that much pressure of the dam away. So we lead them out. Those drains are provided in every dam I have ever built.
>
> Q. At what intervals were these bleeders put in?
>
> A. About every fifteen or twenty or twenty-five feet.
>
> Q. Practically almost to the top of the dam, as you went along?
>
> A. No, the west end was a homogenous ground. There was no drain necessary in those. It was much tighter. It was about as hard as the other but tighter and more compact. The rocks—the fractured rocks, all the hard rocks in this country are more or less fractured and you can go to the mountains here and look at the granites on every hill side and you will see them fissured and fractured more or less, but they will carry water without doubt, but the prudent thing is to drain them out.
>
> Q. But the points of under drainage was [sic] put in where the rock was seen to be fractured?
>
> A. Yes.[86]

In essence, Mulholland acknowledged the possibility of uplift acting through the fractured schist. But—while professing that "the prudent thing is to drain them out" and that it is "always expedient to drain them out so there will not be any up-pressure"—he confined his attention only to the dam's center section. He ignored the possibility that, as the level of the reservoir rose, water would extend up the east canyon wall and then seep into the fractured schist foundation. Beyond placing drainage wells in the center section, Mulholland did little to counter the possibility of uplift acting on the St. Francis Dam. As essentially all engineers who investigated the disaster acknowledged, the canyon walls had not been drained, no inspection/drainage tunnel had been placed in the dam's interior, there had been no grouting, and the structure lacked a cut-off trench extending across the site.[87] Moreover, as Outland discerned, Mulholland had raised the dam's height but without widening the base. With this latter action, he exacerbated the destabilizing effect of uplift and necessarily increased the potential for disaster.

Rogers avers that "many engineers were just beginning to appreciate the destabilizing effects of uplift pressures in the late 1920s" and promotes the impression that uplift represented an esoteric, little-appreciated phenomenon when St. Francis Dam was built.[88] If the date given by Rogers had been 1910, such a perspective could be defended. However, for a decade prior to construction of St. Francis Dam, uplift had engendered widespread concern. The extent of this concern—and action taken in actual construction—warrants close attention because the effect of uplift on the stability of St. Francis Dam speaks directly to why more than 400 people perished in the early hours of March 13, 1928.

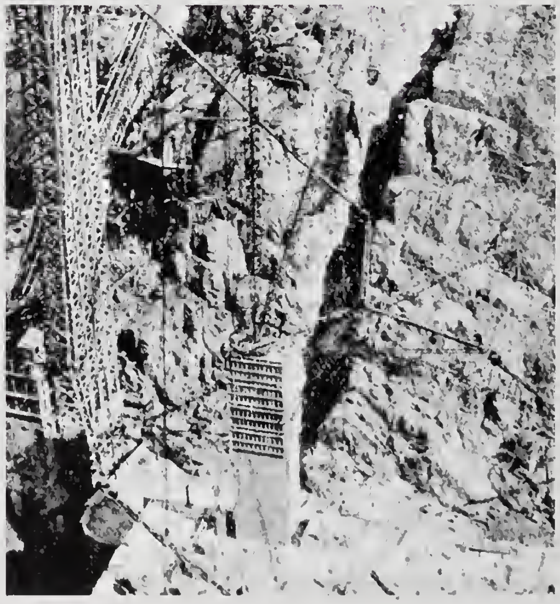
In the mid-nineteenth century uplift was not accommodated into gravity-dam design protocols.[89] Nonetheless, dam builders soon began to recognize the dangers posed by uplift and to develop measures to counter its effect. Most notably, concern about uplift prompted British engineers building Liverpool's Vrynwy Dam (a gravity structure completed in 1892) to incorporate drainage wells into its design, an action publicized in British engineering journals.[90] Not all civil engineers in the late nineteenth century—most prominently, Edward Wegmann, U.S. author of *The Design and Construction of Dams* (1888 and several subsequent editions)—paid heed to uplift. Thus, in 1904 Edward Godfrey could complain in *Engineering News* that "I find nothing in [books] on dams mentioning this floating tendency of the water which percolates under dams."[91] Four years later Godfrey reiterated his complaint, a critique obviated in 1910 when Charles E. Morrison and Orrin L. Brodie's *High Masonry Dam Design* directly criticized Wegmann for failing to account for uplift in gravity dam designs. As part of this, they asserted that "Present practice requires [that uplift]. . . be considered where a structure of great responsibility is proposed . . . ."[92]

Apprehension about uplift intensified following the collapse of a concrete gravity dam in Austin, Pennsylvania, on September 30, 1911. Located about two miles upstream from town, the Austin Dam failed catastrophically, taking at least seventy-eight lives.[93] The calamity attracted great public attention and galvanized the American dam-building community to take action against the potentially disastrous effects of uplift. A leader in this effort was John R. Freeman, a prominent New England-based engineer who, in 1906, had served on the board of consulting engineers who reviewed Mulholland's plans for the Los Angeles Aqueduct.[94] A prominent advocate of gravity-dam technology, Freeman rushed to the site of the Austin tragedy and reported in *Engineering News*: "the cause that probably led to the failure of the Austin PA dam," he declared, was "the penetration of water-pressure into and underneath the mass of the dam, together with the secondary effect of lessening the stability of the dam against sliding." Freeman implored engineers to understand that "uplift pressures may possibly occur under or within any masonry dam and should always be accounted for."[95] At the time, Freeman was helping oversee construction of New York City's Ashokan (also known as Olive Bridge) and Kensico dams, two projects that—as *Engineering News* described Kensico Dam in April 1912—countered "upward water pressure" with foundation pressure-grouting and an extensive drainage system.[96]

Also taking the Austin failure very seriously was Arthur Powell Davis, chief engineer (later director) of the U.S. Reclamation Service, who believed that the failure of Austin Dam "was caused by an upward pressure on the base of the dam." After visiting the disaster site, Davis expressed concern about the possible effect of uplift on the service's Elephant Butte Dam, a concrete gravity structure more than two hundred-feet high to be built across the Rio Grande in southern New Mexico.[97] The agency soon approved a design for Elephant Butte that included extensive grouting, placement of a drainage system along the length of the dam, and a deep cut-off trench. The service's close attention to the Elephant Butte foundation was documented in engineering journals and Davis's 1917 book, *Irrigation Works Constructed by the United States Government*, which described a "variety of precautions . . . adopted to prevent percolation under the [Elephant Butte] dam, and to relieve any upward pressure that might develop there."[98] For the service's 354-foot high concrete gravity Arrowrock Dam built in 1913–1915 near Boise, Idaho, Davis could similarly report: "In order to prevent leakage in the foundation of the [Arrowrock] dam, a line of holes was drilled into the foundation just below the upstream face of the dam to depths of 30 to 40 feet. They were grouted under pressure . . . [and] another line of holes was drilled to serve as drainage holes to relieve any leakage under the dam. These were continued upward into the masonry and emerged into a large tunnel running the entire length of the dam. The success of the Arrowrock drainage system was described in 1930 by C. E. Grunsky, who pointedly related it to the St. Francis collapse: "My visit to this dam [Arrowrock] was made at a time when the reservoir was filled. The func-

OTHER CURVED GRAVITY DAMS: IN CONTRAST TO ST. FRANCIS . . .

The Arrowrock, Exchequer, and O'Shaughnessy (Hetch Hetchy) dams were concrete curved-gravity dams built prior to or contemporaneously with the St. Francis Dam. Significantly, all of them incorporated features to alleviate the effect of uplift that extended far beyond Mulholland's efforts at St. Francis. These photos, including views published in the nationally prominent *Engineering News-Record*, graphically testify to construction practices absent from the St. Francis Dam.



Arrowrock Dam

Top, Left: *Downstream side of Arrowrock Dam, built in 1913–1915 by the U. S. Reclamation Service across the Boise River in southern Idaho. Constructed under the general authority of Arthur Powell Davis, the design featured grouting and drainage of the foundation along the full length of the structure.*

DC Jackson/damhistory.com

Top, Center: *Construction view at Arrowrock showing drainage pipes running along the upstream face.*

Joseph B. Lippincott Collection, Water Resources Center Archives

Top, Right: *Interior view of Arrowrock Dam showing the interior inspection/drainage gallery. The St. Francis design lacked any comparable drainage tunnel.*

DC Jackson/damhistory.com

Exchequer Dam

Middle, Left: *Circa 1926 construction view of Exchequer Dam in the Sierra Nevada foothills near Merced, California. This photo shows how "expansion joints," spaced fifty feet apart, divided the dam's concrete into a series of vertical components. No expansion joints were incorporated into the St. Francis design, and major cracks in the upstream face exacerbated the effect of uplift on Mulholland's dam.*

Charles Derleth Collection. Water Resources Center Archive

Middle, Center: *1925 construction view showing the cut-off trench and drainage pipes (left foreground) at Exchequer. Compare this to photos on pages 21, 23, and 26 and it is evident that, in terms of abutment drainage up the canyon walls, the Exchequer design significantly exceeded what was done at the St. Francis site.*

Engineering News-Record, May 28, 1925

Middle, Right: *Detail view showing (along the left edge of the dam) the row of drainage pipes extending the length of Exchequer Dam's upstream face.*

Charles Derleth Collection Water Resources Center Archives

O'Shaughnessy (Hetch Hetchy) Dam

Bottom, Far Left: *Circa 1925 "before and after" photos of Hetch Hetchy Valley and O'Shaughnessy Dam in Yosemite National Park. Like Los Angeles, San Francisco was exempt from California's 1917 dam-safety law and chief engineer M. M. O'Shaughnessy built the dam without the approval or scrutiny of the state engineer. On his own initiative, O'Shaughnessy incorporated into his design measures to counter uplift that far exceeded what Mulholland did at St. Francis.*

DC Jackson/damhistory.com

Bottom, Left Center: *1922 construction view of O'Shaughnessy Dam showing cutoff trench extending up the canyon wall.*

Engineering News-Record, June 8, 1922

Bottom, Right Center: *Two of the 1,600 porous concrete drainage blocks placed in O'Shaughnessy Dam. The photo appeared in* Engineering News-Record *in September 1922 and would have been easily accessible to Mulholland and his staff as they prepared the St. Francis design.*

Engineering News-Record, September 21, 1922

Bottom, Far Right: *1922 photograph showing how the porous drainage blocks were placed in the cutoff trenches extending up the canyon walls at O'Shanghnessy Dam. Chief engineer M.M. O'Shaughnessy is shown at left in front of the blocks.*

M. M. O'Shaughnessy Collection, Bancroft Library tioning of the weepholes was noticeable. In some cases the flow from the gooseneck outlet pipes amounted to several thousand gallons per day. If there were no drainage of the foundation there would be great likelihood of a large uplifting force such as that which, at the St. Francis Dam, contributed to its failure."[99]

After the agency became the Bureau of Reclamation in 1923, concern about uplift continued. For example, Black Canyon Dam in southern Idaho, a 184-foot high concrete gravity structure completed in 1924, featured two rows of grout holes "drilled into the bedrock along the upstream edge of the dam along its entire length. . . . [A] row of drainage holes was drilled 8 feet downstream from the second row of grout holes. . . . The water from them is carried to a tile drain embedded in the concrete parallel with the axis of the dam." In case anyone missed the point, *Engineering News-Record* declared: "The purpose of this drainage system is to collect and lead off any water that might accumulate and to prevent an upward pressure under the dam."[100] After leaving the Reclamation Service in 1923, Davis became chief engineer of Oakland's East Bay Municipal Utility District where his concern about uplift became manifest in the Llana Plancha (later Pardee) Dam. This concrete curved-gravity structure featured foundation grouting and an extensive drainage system running up both canyon walls. Construction started in 1927 and the design was illustrated in *Engineering News-Record* the same week that the St. Francis Dam collapsed.[101]

Freeman, Davis, and the Reclamation Service were hardly alone in drawing attention to the perils of uplift in the aftermath of the Austin Dam failure. In 1912, C. L. Harrison brought together the views of twenty engineers on the subject in a *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* article where, as Harrison summarized: "Each of the twenty discussions presented on the subject recognizes the existence of uplift."[102] The next year, *Engineering News* described field tests in Germany that confirmed the existence of uplift pressures. This prompted Edward Godfrey to proclaim: "the results of these experiments further emphasizes [sic] what the author has said before: It is a crime to design a dam without considering upward pressure."[103]

Authors of technical books also addressed the perils of uplift and Chester W. Smith's *The Construction of Masonry Dams* (1915) included a ten-page section describing how cut-off trenches, foundation grouting, and drainage systems could ameliorate the effects of uplift.[104] The 1916 edition of Morrison and Brodie's *High Masonry Dam Design* (retitled *Masonry Dam Design Including High Masonry Dams*) began with a fifteen-page discussion of uplift that described "several ways in which upward pressure may be cared for," including use of a foundation cut-off trench, "adding a sufficient section to the dam to offset the upward pressure, and . . . providing drainage wells and galleries to intercept all entering water."[105] A year later, William Creager's *Masonry Dams* (1917) emphasized the need to counter uplift in the aptly titled chapter, "Requirements for Stability of Gravity Dams." In addition, references to uplift appeared throughout the book.[106] "The methods of design described [in *Masonry Dams*] and the assumptions recommended," Creager advised readers, "represent present conservative practice, and correspond to a proper degree of safety for the average enterprise, and where considerable damage to property and loss of human life would result if failure occurred."[107]

By 1916–1917, serious concern about uplift on the part of American dam engineers was neither obscure nor unusual. Equally to the point, in the early 1920s, Mulholland's placement of drainage wells only in the center section of St. Francis Dam did not reflect standard practice in California for large concrete gravity dams. Earlier, in 1916, when Hiram Savage developed plans for two municipally owned concrete gravity dams near San Diego, he followed the lead set by the Reclamation Service. His designs for Lower Otay Dam (completed in 1917) and Barrett Dam (1922) called for grouting and drainage wells along the length of the structures and for a cut-off trench (containing a "continuous 12-[inch] sub drain") to run the length of both dams.[108] In northern California, the Scott Dam (also known as Snow Mountain Dam), built by the Snow Mountain Power Company across the Eel River in 1922, featured "grouting below the cut-off wall" as well as a network of under-drains to "carry off seepage water. . . . The drains under the dam consist of porous concrete tile . . . . Lines were laid parallel with the axis of the dam and on 15-ft. centers under the entire structure."[109] In California's Central Valley in the mid-1920s, the Merced Irrigation District constructed Exchequer Dam, a large concrete-curved gravity structure that featured a cut-off wall and an extensive drainage system running up both canyon walls.[110]

San Francisco, the only municipality in California that compared in size and wealth with Los Angeles (and a city that also benefited from the dam safety law's "municipal exemption"), began construction in 1919 on a large water supply dam in the Sierra Nevada. The concrete curved-gravity Hetch Hetchy Dam (later renamed O'Shaughnessy Dam after the project's chief engineer) featured an extensive drainage system consisting of 1,600 porous concrete blocks and a cut-off trench running up both canyon walls. The dam reached an initial height of about 330 feet in 1923 (it was extended to 430 feet in 1938) and, as detailed by *Engineering News-Record* in 1922, "the porous concrete blocks are placed in the bottom of the cut-off trench for its full length, and also in vertical tiers."[111] The Hetch Hetchy Dam's extensive drainage system—designed and implemented *before* 1924—clearly bore scant resemblance to Mulholland's minimal effort to counter uplift at St. Francis Dam.

Contemporary measures, like those taken at Hetch Hetchy/O'Shaughnessy and at other gravity dams in California to provide for drainage up the canyon walls of a dam site, did not escape attention at the coroner's inquest. The issue prompted frank comments in the testimony of M. H. Slocum, the construction supervisor at Exchequer and Scott dams and a participant in the foundation preparation and early concrete placement at Hetch Hetchy.

> Q. [By the Coroner]: In your opinion, how could undermining of the foundation [of St. Francis Dam] have been prevented?
>
> A. [Slocum]: On other work of such a character with which I have been connected, it has been done by putting in drainage holes, connected up to a drainage gallery which intercepts the water practically at the upstream base, taking away the uplift and letting it run off downstream without any pressure.
>
> Q. [By a Juror]: Is it common practice to run the drainage lines you are speaking of pretty well up the sides of the hills?
>
> A. Drainage galleries in Exchequer, Hetch-Hetchy, [and] Snow Mountain run to all intents and purposes to the top of the dams, clear to the top.
>
> Q. Have you ever seen or heard of a dam which you considered to be a safe and properly designed dam, which didn't provide some means of draining up the sides?
>
> A. I have been to a great many dams, and to my memory I can't remember of any that haven't had drainage, drainage galleries in them of the gravity type, not of strict arch type, this [St. Francis] was a gravity type.[112]

Additional evidence could be cited to demonstrate the awareness of America's dam-building engineering community, prior to the St. Francis disaster, of the threat posed by uplift and of the extensive measures taken to offset its effect.[113] But the material presented here justifies the observation in 1927 of noted engineer Fred Noetzli: "conservative engineering requires that gravity dams be designed for uplift." It also underscores that such conservatism was hardly an anomaly by the 1920s.[114] Why Mulholland ignored the tocsin sounded by numerous engineers—both in print and in practice—over the dangers of uplift remains a mystery. After all, he was supposedly a voracious, self-schooled devotee of technical information.[115] But labeling the rationale for his actions as somehow mysterious does not excuse them. Many American dam builders of the teens and 1920s understood the importance of countering uplift with measures that went far beyond the meager steps taken at St. Francis Dam. Mulholland stood apart from his contemporaries on this crucial issue of safety and the results proved tragic.

MULHOLLAND: PRIVILEGE AND HUBRIS

William Mulholland was often admired for his ability to meet complex challenges, but he was not inclined to seek the counsel of his peers. His go-it-alone approach at St. Francis did not accord with the common practice of dam builders and the organizations financing construction to consult with outside experts. When, for example, John Freeman set out in 1909 to design Big Bend Dam in northern California for the Great Western Power Company, he secured the services of Arthur Powell Davis and Mulholland as consultants on the project. Two years later, the same company engaged the highly respected engineers James Schuyler and Alfred Noble to review John Eastwood's design for the nearby Big Meadows Dam.[116] Similarly, in 1916–1917, while planning construction of the municipally owned Lower Otay and Barrett dams in San Diego County, Hiram Savage sought the advice of well-known dam engineer A. J. Wiley.[117]

Outside of California between 1907 and 1916, New York City relied upon a panel of engineering consultants to help design the Catskill water supply system (including the Ashokan/Olive Bridge Dam); the Miami Conservancy District (a model for the Tennessee Valley Authority) engaged a group of consulting engineers in 1913 to review designs for flood-control dams in central Ohio;[118] and the Reclamation Service (later Bureau) initiated a policy in 1903 requiring dam designs and other projects to be reviewed by "engineering boards."[119] In April 1928, the bureau rushed to remind the public and fellow engineers of this policy: "The recent unfortunate failure of the St. Francis Dam in California," announced the bureau in *Engineering News-Record*, justifies "special mention of the extensive geological and engineering investigations that preceded the approval of the site and designs for the Owyhee Dam" that included three geologists and three engineers not on the bureau staff.[120]

Significantly, Mulholland himself had on at least one occasion recognized the value of outside review. In 1912 he requested Arthur P. Davis to visit the Lower San Fernando Dam site. His reason for doing so is telling, because the explanation could apply with equal force to later dams for which he sought no outside review. "I requested or rather suggested to the Board of Public Service Commissioners," Mulholland told Davis, "that an engineer be employed to examine the proposed San Fernando Dam [site] when it is stripped in order to clear them of any charge that might be brought in the future of having proceeded with the work without competent advice." Here, Mulholland advocated a principle that he thereafter largely ignored.[121]

There were other reasons for Mulholland to have recognized the desirability for seeking outside review of his dam projects. In 1918 his work had attracted public scrutiny after the partial collapse of the earthfill Calaveras Dam. That incident involved a major section of hydraulic fill that "slipped" upstream into the reservoir and required a major reconstruction effort to rectify. Mulholland had supervised the dam's construction starting in 1913 as a consulting engineer for San Francisco's privately owned Spring Valley Water Company. The failure was especially embarrassing since Calaveras was an earthen-hydraulic fill dam, a type that Mulholland had significant experience in building. Indeed, Rogers—apparently unaware of the Calaveras fiasco—places Mulholland among the "founding fathers" of this construction technique.[122] Michael M. O'Shaughnessy, the engineer responsible for San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy project, visited the Calaveras site in 1913, soon complaining to John Freeman about Mulholland's "sloppy" and "slipshod and crude" construction methods. Even more pointedly, O'Shaughnessy opined that Mulholland and his assistant were "so intensely conceited that they imagine all they might do should be immune from criticism."[123]

Prior to the St. Francis failure, Mulholland also ignored sharp professional criticism from Frederick Finkle, an engineer who, a few years before, had publicly rebuked him for using faulty cement in the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Even discounting the fact that it emanated from an earlier detractor of his work, this critique should have given Mulholland pause. In 1924, Finkle visited the St. Francis site at the request of the Santa Monica Anti-Annexation Committee and soon criticized "defects of design and foundation materials" as well as "unfavorable" geological conditions. The latter was supported by tests revealing the propensity of the red conglomerate to dissolve when submerged in water. Finkle also described the structure's base as "insufficient" and "not in accordance with sound engineering practice." His eerily prescient apprehensions—"I would hesitate to recommend a concrete dam on such a foundation"— found their way into the local press along with his prediction: "This dam, if kept full for any length of time, . . . will unquestionably fail."[124] Finkle's warning came prior to the dam's construction but, perhaps because Mulholland dismissed Finkle as some kind of biased naysayer, he ignored it and made no effort to seek significant, independent review of the St. Francis project.

Rogers acknowledges that Mulholland's "omission of any outside consultants to review the [St. Francis] dam's design" was a "weak link in [his] design process." But he fails to see any connection between the dam's collapse and that "weak link." Moreover, he neglects Mulholland's inexperience in building concrete dams. O'Shaughnessy did not miss the connection and seven months after the St. Francis failure, he bluntly told California State Engineer Edward Hyatt: "Los Angeles made an error in committing its policies of high concrete dam construction to one man, whose previous experience had been confined to building low head, hydraulic filled dams. . . . This was no justification for entrusting him with the design and construction of a high head masonry dam, hence they [Los Angeles] are now paying the bill."[125]

Rogers, in a published interview, also confounds his own judgments about Mulholland's competence by reversing course and indicting "the Chief" for flaws that he (Rogers) had previously rejected or ignored. Mulholland's "Achilles heel," states Rogers in the 2000 interview, was "his thriftiness," his ability "to build enormous projects at a fraction of the cost [that] any other public agency was able to achieve," a practice that explains "why his services were sought by so many." His parsimony, explains Rogers, "led to many aspects of dam design that were omitted from St. Francis, which might have saved the dam from failing. These included items such as seepage cut-offs, foundation keyways, grout curtains, additional uplift relief, expansion joints, inspection gallery, geologic evaluations, and any manner of external consulting, outside his own BWWS [Bureau of Water Works and Supply] staff."[126]

Such criticism stands in contrast to Rogers's contentions in his two articles that Mulholland and the dam-building profession "did not completely appreciate or understand the concepts of effective stress and uplift, precepts just then beginning to gain recognition and acceptance."[127] Which way would Rogers have it—that the St. Francis Dam disaster was due to Mulholland's parsimony, which led him to omit technologies for countering uplift; or that it was due to his ignorance of those technologies and their value as "inherent redundancies" (to borrow Rogers's phrasing) in countering uplift?[128] While we appreciate Rogers's descriptions of the mechanics of the dam's collapse—as we do the analyses of the Grunskys, Willis, Outland, and others whose earlier findings he affirmed—his ventures into the historical interpretation of Mulholland and the St. Francis Dam disaster possess far less cogency.

REQUIEM FOR MULHOLLAND?

Unlike Outland's dispassionate, yet moving, account in *Man-Made Disaster*, Rogers specifically sought to rescue Mulholland's reputation and correct what he perceived as injustices done to the "Chief" in the wake of the dam's collapse. He expressed that goal candidly in his *Southern California Quarterly* article under the heading "Requiem for Mulholland":

> we should be so lucky as to have any men with just half his character, integrity, imagination and leadership today. Big Bill Mulholland was the kind of rugged individualist that [sic] made great things happen, but his style of standing on principle would never be seen as "politically correct" in the style of today's committee-sitting, bean counting, lawyer-consulting, image-conscious compromisers. Mulholland would sooner "give birth to a porcupine backwards" than to have to work inside air conditioned buildings sitting in padded chairs with people of compromising principle.[129]

In this article we offer a distinct counterpoint to Rogers's perspective. We also take issue with any notion that Mulholland's conduct in raising the height of St. Francis Dam without increasing the base's thickness—or his failure to design the dam in accord with the same appreciation for uplift as practiced by his contemporaries—can in any way be countenanced as somehow "standing on principle."

Significantly, evidence suggests that Mulholland actually was treated rather gently following the dam's collapse. Not kindly disposed toward him, of course, were residents of the Santa Clara Valley as dramatically reflected in the sign erected by one woman in her front yard: "KILL MULHOLLAND!" Moreover, his granddaughter has recalled that "threats were made against his life, and he lived with an armed guard around his home." But his professional colleagues did not publicly pillory him. The Los Angeles Board of Water and Power Commissioners rejected demands for his immediate dismissal and he stayed on as Chief Engineer for several months until resigning in November 1928. Even then, the city retained him as a consultant at a salary of $500 a month, a post he held till his death seven years later.[130]

Public honors continued to come his way and city officials in April 1928 invited him as a guest of honor at a luncheon celebrating the new Los Angeles City Hall. He declined, but invitations continued to arrive, including one (not accepted) to the White House ceremony in December 1928 where President Calvin Coolidge signed the Boulder Canyon Project Act into law. An invitation that he did accept came in 1933 from the Los Angeles Water and Power Commission, which honored him "for producing a supply of water in the City of Los Angeles adequate for the uses of a population calculated on an unprecedentedly rapid basis of increase." There were also tributes, like that in 1933 from *Western Construction News*, which honored him "as a man of history and the maker of Los Angeles." They continued even after his death in praise-filled obituaries and other accolades, some making no mention of the St. Francis Dam collapse. Despite the honors coming during the years prior to his death in 1935, Mulholland withdrew from the public and fell into melancholy. He apparently anguished over the devastation wrought by the St. Francis flood and took little solace from those who remembered him as a "big man" and a person of "sterling quality" for accepting responsibility for the disaster.[131]

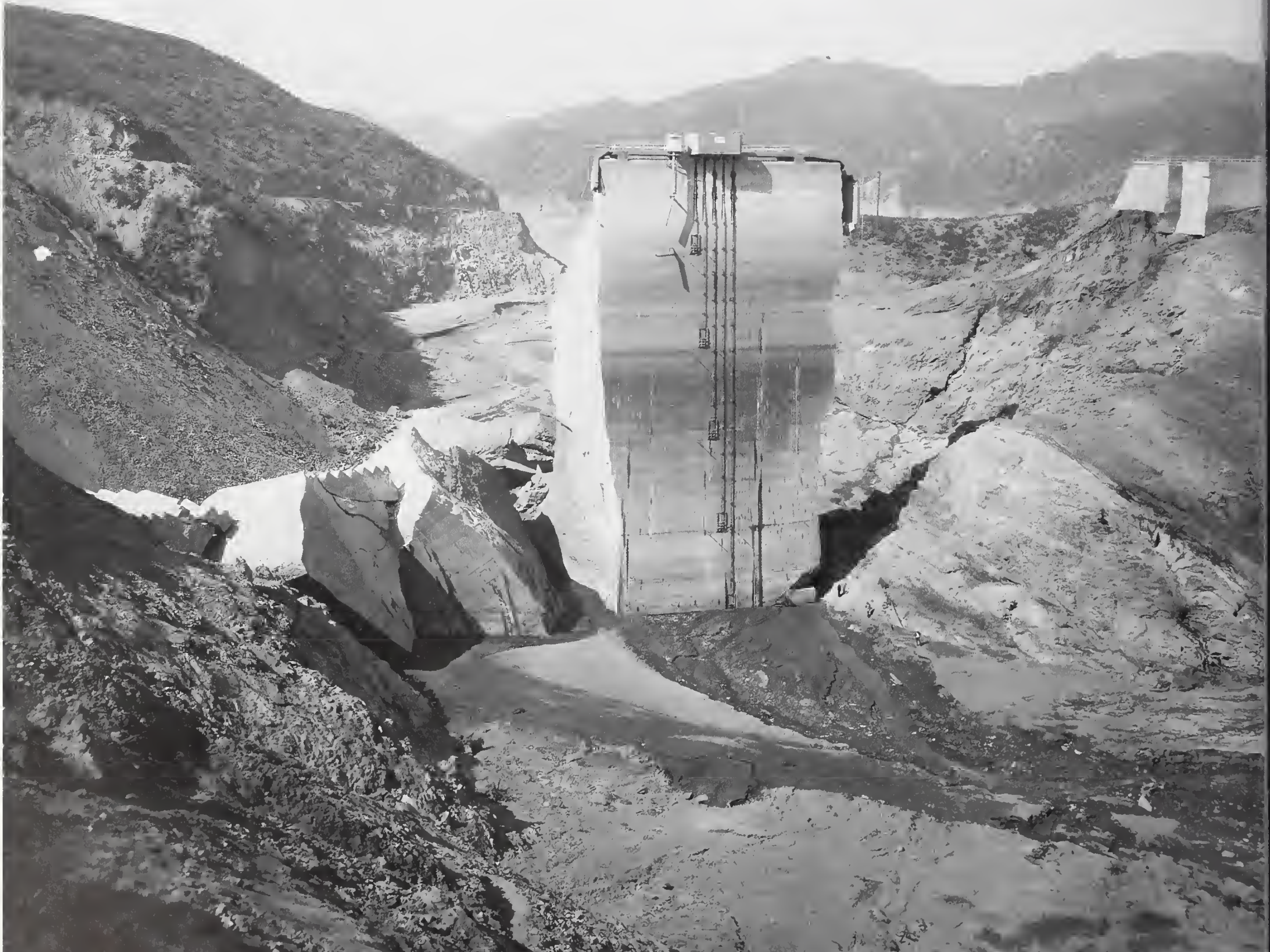
Many prominent engineers avoided public comments that might cast aspersions on or disturb the "Chief," but their private thoughts could be less than supportive. Consider what Arthur P. Davis wrote to John Freeman following a visit to the dam site on March 19, 1928. Emphasizing that his comments were to be held in confidence, Davis observed that conditions "all pointed to the vital necessity of preventing any percolation into the foundation" and he bemoaned the lack of a "deep cut-off trench," "deep grouting," and "adequate drainage wells." Making specific reference to the Elephant Butte, Ashokan/Olive

Prior to March 1928, "The Chief" was a dominant figure in western water development. For example, in this circa 1924 publicity photograph Mulholland (on the left) leads a group of engineers on a visit to the future site of Hoover (Boulder) Dam. Following the St. Francis Dam disaster, his colleagues largely refrained from direct public criticism and, after he resigned from the city's Bureau of Water Works and Supply in November 1928, they treated him with great personal respect. But his professional reputation was shattered and never again would he play a significant role in the planning or execution of any major hydraulic engineering projects.

DC JACKSON/DAMHISTORY.COM

Bridge, and Arrowrock dams, he went so far as to say that, "had provisions existed [at St. Francis], as established by recent practice . . . [at] many other existing dams, the accident might have been avoided."[132]

J. B. Lippincott wrote to Freeman in March 1928 about the disaster, prefacing his remarks with the admission: "I have been very careful to avoid discussing this in any public way because of my old friendship and respect for Mr. Mulholland." But this public reticence did not prevent him from acknowledging the problematic character of the "broken schist" encountered in San Francisquito Canyon during construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct. "The foundations on which the dam was built were not good," he admitted, adding: "It is my understanding that the dam had little of anything under it in the way of a drainage system."[133] In reply, Freeman confessed that he, too, was avoiding public discussion of the disaster: "I have been careful . . . to say nothing [to newspaper reporters] regarding the Los Angeles dam which could come back to hurt Mulholland." He followed this disclosure with candid criticism of Mulholland for his habit of not consulting independent experts: "[he] does not appreciate the benefit of calling in men from outside to get their better prospective [sic]



For more than a year after floodwaters laid waste to the Santa Clara Valley, the center section of the St. Francis Dam remained in place, an imposing (if unintentional) monument to the tragedy. In 1929, a curiosity seeker at the site fell to his death, prompting the city to dynamite the concrete monolith into a less visually provocative mass of rubble. While the dam itself seemingly could be erased from the landscape of San Francisquito Canyon, the horror of the flood in the collective memory of the Santa Clara Valley—and California as a whole—has proved far more enduring.

Henry E. Huntington Library, Courtney Collection

and their independent point of view."[134] To another colleague, Freeman reinforced the point: "This [St. Francis Dam] site plainly required many precautions that were ignored, and while I have the highest personal regard for my good old friend William Mulholland, I can but feel that he trusted too much to his own individual knowledge, particularly for a man who had no scientific education."[135]

ETROSPECT

The St. Francis disaster quickly spawned a new California dam-safety law that eliminated the municipal exemption. After 1929, all the state's non-federal dams came under the authority of the Department of Public Works and the administrative oversight of the State Engineer (later assumed by the Division of Safety of Dams).[136] Many people believe that the 1929 law created regulatory mechanisms responsible for saving thousands of lives. A case in point was the near-collapse of Mulholland's Lower San Fernando Dam during the 1971 San Fernando Valley earthquake. "If it had not been for the [storage] restrictions imposed by the Division of Safety of Dams," states engineer Irving Sherman, "the water level in the reservoir might have been ten feet higher than what it actually was—in which case the [hydraulic-fill earthen] dam would have been overtopped and at least partially washed away." Instead, "the 80,000 people downstream . . . were temporarily evacuated until after the danger had passed."[137]

But regulation is a double-edged sword, and the development of innovative dam technologies was not necessarily advanced by the 1929 law. While gravity-dam design may have escaped stagnation, the new law proved enormously burdensome to hoped-for advances in multiple-arch dam technology and, in California, did much to eliminate the technology from the realm of acceptable design.[138] Of course, the sad truth is that the St. Francis Dam design did not draw upon any innovative advances in dam technology that might somehow have unwittingly fostered failure. Far from it, for in terms of large-scale concrete gravity dams of the 1920s, Mulholland's St. Francis design was, to borrow a phrase from architectural history, a *retardaire* structure. It suffered not from creative innovation but from an egregious lack thereof.

More than any other person, Mulholland shaped Los Angeles's water policy and laid the foundation for the modern city. When he resigned in 1928 the city's oil, motion picture, real estate, and tourist industries were booming; the Department of Water and Power had become the most powerful municipal agency in the United States; and Los Angeles was in the vanguard of a host of southern California cities embarking on a new phase of water-seeking that would reach to the Colorado River. But such achievement had not come without great human, psychic, and economic costs—among them the collapse of a dam in the remote reaches of the upper Santa Clara Valley that took more than 400 lives.

Despite equivocations, denial of dangers that he knew—or reasonably should have known—existed, pretense to scientific knowledge regarding gravity-dam technology that he possessed neither through experience nor education, and invocations of "hoodoos," William Mulholland understood the great privilege that had been afforded him to build the St. Francis Dam where and how he chose. Because of this privilege—and the decisions that he made—William Mulholland bears responsibility for the St. Francis Dam disaster.[139]

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Los Angeles's Jazz Roots:
THE WILLIS H. YOUNG FAMILY

By Douglas Henry Daniels

The historical and etymological origins of jazz are rather murky, although the average fan associates the history with New Orleans and the Deep South and often with African Americans. As it happens, the word "jazz" first appeared in print in a California newspaper in 1913. The term[1] itself was traditionally linked with a style of dance and sometimes with sex. Analysis of the history of jazz in Los Angeles reveals how closely the city was linked with its development and popularization and that it played a singular role in the acceptance of the music in Hollywood's film industry, in southern California night clubs, and in its spread throughout the world. As the Louisiana patriarch of his extended family, Willis Handy Young (1872–1943), bandleader and professor of music, played a signal role in jazz history and its development in Los Angeles.[2]

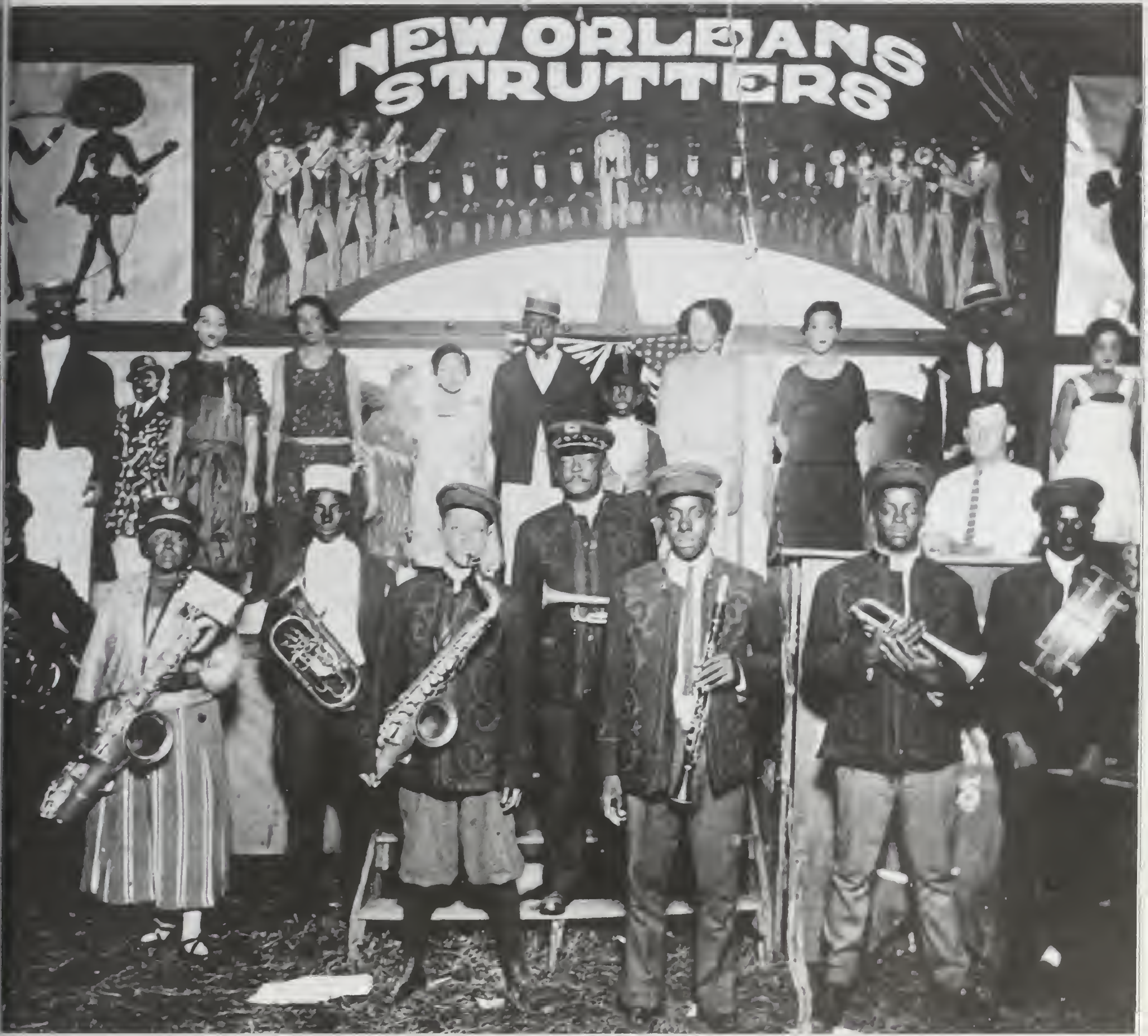
Studies that focus on key cities—New Orleans or Chicago—fail to appreciate the considerable impact of jazz on the hinterlands and on the West Coast, or, for that matter, the effects of these regions on the evolution of the music. Significantly, jazz did not simply migrate north to Chicago, it radiated from a number of urban centers at about the same time—late in the second decade of the twentieth century.

EARLY LOS ANGELES JAZZ

Despite the usual emphasis on New Orleans, Chicago, Kansas City, and New York in histories of jazz, Los Angeles and San Francisco assumed roles of singular significance in the music's origins and evolution. Typically, a New Orleans citizen reached the West Coast, found a great demand for jazz and sent for enough of his fellow residents to field a band. For example, at least one member of the Original Creole Jazz band, one o the three bands singled out as the creators or purveyors of New Orleans jazz, could be found in Los Angeles as early as 1907, and the band was actually formed on the West Coast and documentation indicates they performed at least as early as 1911. Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton, the self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, included Los Angeles and cities along the Pacific Slope in his wide-ranging travels. He ran shows at the Cadillac Cafe in downtown Los Angeles and in San Francisco and Vancouver in the World War I years. "Jelly Roll" Morton returned to Los Angeles late in 1940. He died the next year and was buried in a Los Angeles cemetery.[3]

The number of jazz personalities in Los Angeles within the first decade of the music's history is impressive.[4] Morton played with "Bricktop" (Ada Smith) at the Cadillac on Central Avenue near Seventh Street before she became the owner of the world-renowned Parisian nightclub that carried her nickname; this red-haired entertainer reached Los Angeles in 1917.[5]

New Orleans trombonist Edward "Kid" Ory arrived in 1919, then formed his Creole Jazz Band with Crescent City bandsmen Thomas "Papa Mutt" Carey, Alton Redd, Ed "Montudi" Garland, and Wade Whaley. Ory discovered the demand for the music was such that he sent for Joe "King" Oliver's Creole Jazz Orchestra to fill one of his engagements in 1921.[6] (Oliver's band also played in the Bay Area in early 1922.) Indeed,



The New Orleans Strutters, one of Professor Young's touring ensembles, capitalized on and honored the city's music traditions. Most of the musicians in the photograph belong to the Young family—the entire family learned to play instruments and sing. One of his grandchildren explained, "you could not be in his house and not play some instrument." Some of them learned more than one so they could fill in as needed. The band in this 1924 photograph includes the professor's wife, Sarah, on bass or baritone saxophone and his oldest son, Lester, on tenor saxophone. Irma Young is directly behind her brother Lester; she sang, played saxophone, and danced. The youngest boy, Lee, appeared in blackface and top hat.

COURTESY MARY YOUNG COLLECTION

Professor Willis Handy Young was the patriarch of a dazzlingly talented musical family. The designation of "professor"—an honorific term applied to Black band leaders who were steeped in musical traditions and earned their living this way—was one he shared with such notables as songwriters and arrangers W. C. Handy ("St. Louis Blues"), and, years later, Henry "Buster" Smith ("One O'Clock Jump"). Young, born in the Louisiana bayou country in 1872, brought his family to Los Angeles in the early 1930s after a long and full career as a music teacher and leader of carnival-minstrel and dance bands.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

the first authentic records of Crescent City jazz were made by Kid Ory's Creole Orchestra and b Ory with singers, in Los Angeles in 1922; this was also the first recording of the music by Africa Americans, just five years after the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, the white group whose records first popularized the music.[7]

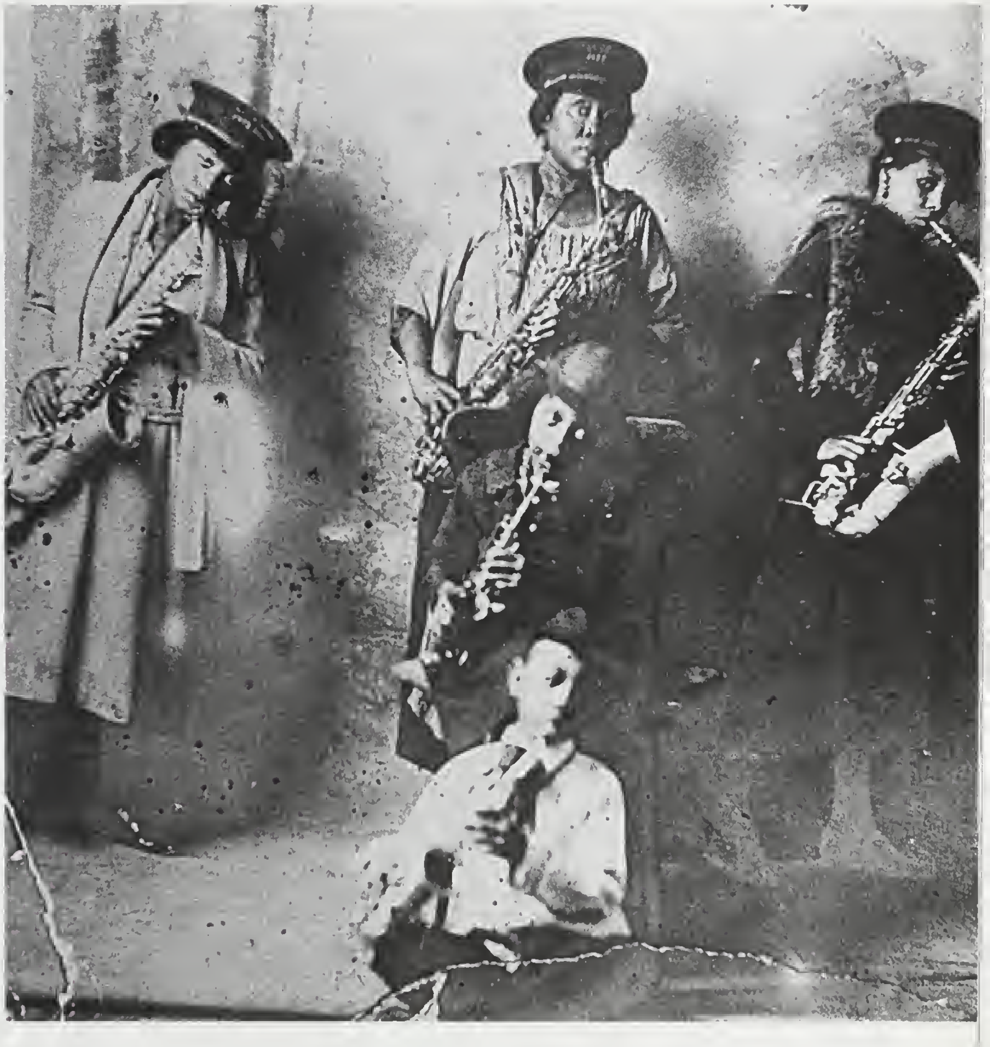
The producers of this session, John and Benjami "Reb" Spikes, opened a music store at 1203 Central Avenue in 1919; the versatile brothers wrote songs, published music, and provided bands, sometimes "four or five bands in a night," for clients such as Warner Brothers. They also led and performed in bands; saxophonist Reb Spike was featured in both Los Angeles and San Francisco jazz bands as early as the World War I years. In 1921 the two brothers performed over radio station KFI, then they made records for th soundtracks of Warner Brothers movies. They made a "jazz" film and registered it through Warner Brothers only eleven days after the copyright was filed for *The Jazz Singer*, thought to be the first sound motion picture, in 1927. By 1930, Reb Spikes ran a restaurant next door to the Dunbar Hotel with Curtis Mosby.[8]

Jimmy Rushing came to California from Oklahoma City to perform in 1923 for movie stars in the Quality Night Club and in another resort, the Jump Steady, which he described as "a rough place." Rushing stayed for about two or three years and then returned to join the Oklahoma City Blue Devils and the Benny Moten and Count Basie bands.[9]

Tessie Patterson managed the Humming Bird Café, formerly the Quality Café, at 1143 East Twelfth, in 1924, and both clubs featured local singers, musicians, entertainers, and quality food. Curtis Mosby, an enterprising musician from Kansas City, led the Dixieland Blue Blowers and, by 1929 or 1930, opened nightclubs in Los Angeles and San Francisco, evidencing the close musical connections between the two California metropolises. He ran two Apex Clubs—one for each city. The famous Club Alabam succeeded the southern California Apex—"the mecca for

Sarah Young (middle, upper row) was remembered by her grandchildren as a "very very aristocratic lady." Not only did Mrs. Young play in the family ensembles, but even during the lean years of the Depression she provided for the large household. Their grandchildren recalled that "We never felt [the effects of the Depression] stomach-wise, because there was always something on the table." At that time "a lot of people were in the bread lines . . . but we always had something to eat." Sarah Young prepared "greens, ham hocks, neckbones, chicken, sweet potato pies, lemon pies, and peach cobblers." During hard times she cooked "the best pork skins you ever had in your life" or boiled skins with red beans and rice.

Courtesy Mary Young Collection

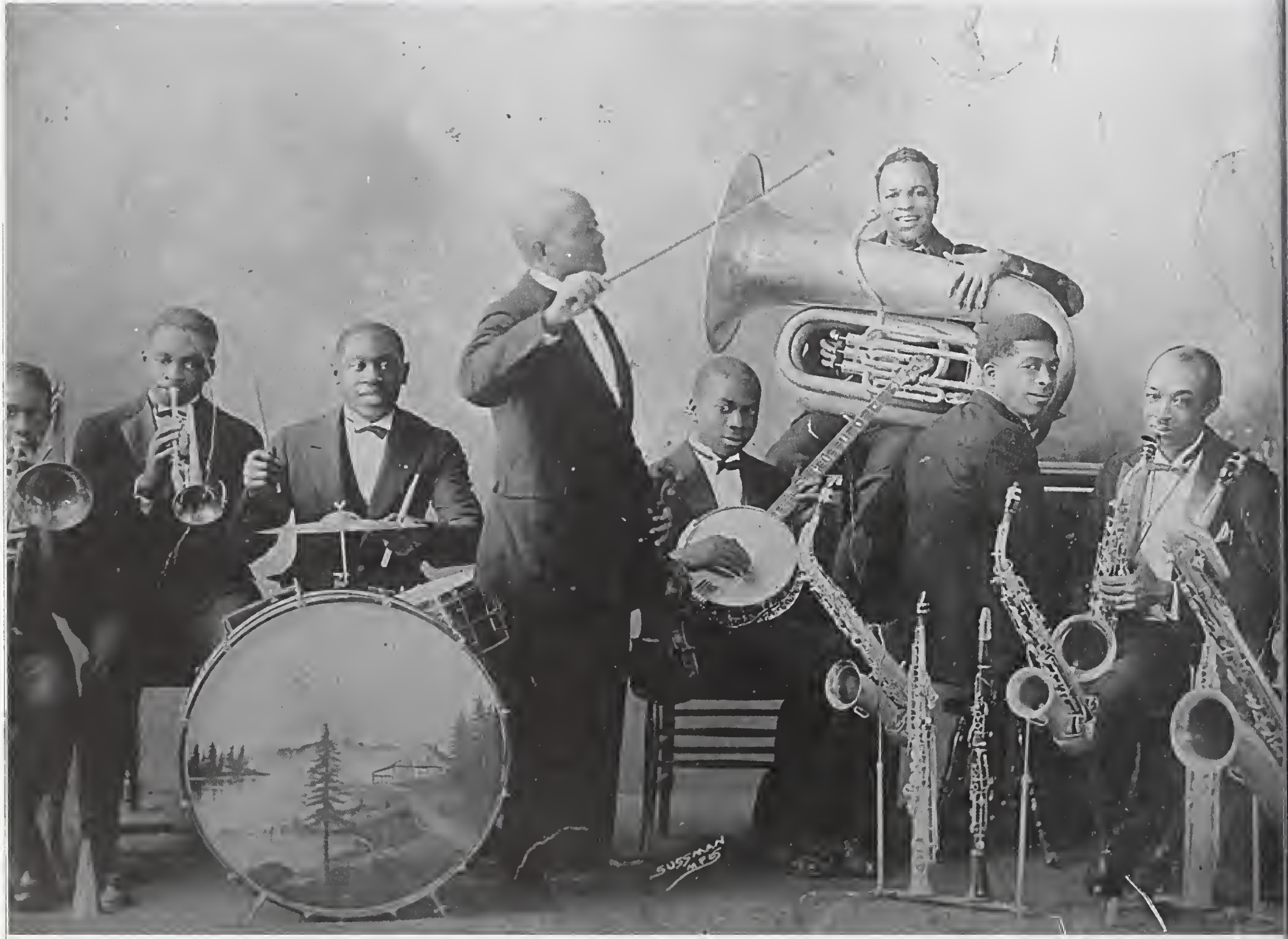


music lovers and devotees of the dance" around 1932. The Club Alabam occupied the site of the old Club Araby, which itself preceded the Apex. It was owned by the Rizzo Brothers; Mosby managed it, however, and bought it around 1940. It was located at 4015 S. Central Avenue (later 4215 when the city renumbered the streets) in the lower level of a building next to the Dunbar Hotel.[10]

When the Young family moved to Los Angeles in 1930, they encountered a local jazz milieu nearly two decades old. It had been accelerated by the advent of sound in movies, an area where the Spikes brothers pioneered; by the filming of Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong performances; and by the developing swing movement in the mid- and late 1930s. Willis H. Young was one of many Black Louisianans who made Los Angeles home. Like so many of the others, he did not move directly to the West Coast when he left the Deep South; he brought his family in stages that included a year's residence in Minneapolis in 1927 and then stints in Albuquerque and Phoenix. The family's nomadic existence ended when they settled in at 1651 Essex Street south of downtown Los Angeles in the early 1930s.[11]

PROFESSOR WILLIS H. YOUNG

Willis Young was born in 1872 in the bayou country of Lafourche Parish about fifty miles west of New Orleans; his father, Jacob, worked as a blacksmith and cooper just outside of Thibodaux, the parish seat. Martha, his mother, was an African Methodist Episcopal missionary who traveled spreading the gospel. Willis was the



Before settling in Los Angeles, Professor Young led a dance band that had a year's residency in Minneapolis in 1927. Lester Young is at the extreme right; Otto "Pete" Jones extreme left; Leonard "Deke" Phillips second from left. The professor ensured that every musician he worked with had high-quality instruments. His ability to convince salesmen to provide him with musical instruments became memorable characteristics in family oral traditions. Grandson James Tolbert remembered, "my grandfather was the kind of guy who could go down into the music stores with no money, and the proprietor would already have told [salesmen] . . . 'Do not let this man have any credit.'" Professor Young's winning ways and silver tongue "would mesmerize them," and as a result, anyone studying under him had "a very good instrument."

Courtesy of Alice Plummer

fourth child and third son in a family of five children who grew up in the aftermath of the Civil War. They were literate, beneficiaries of the public schools introduced during Reconstruction, and while his older brothers followed the father's line of work as artisans and farmers, Willis and his older sister Mary became teachers.

How Willis Young learned music is unclear, but he became thoroughly knowledgeable of music traditions: he played every instrument available, learned to notate and arrange music, taught voice, and led carnival-minstrel as well as dance bands. The designation of "professor"—an honorific term applied to Black band leaders who were steeped in musical traditions and earned their living this way— was one he shared with such notables as song writers and arrangers W. C. Handy (known for "St. Louis Blues"), and, years later, Henry "Buster" Smith ("One O'Clock Jump").[12]

Willis Young was a full generation older than Los Angeles jazz pioneers such as Kid Ory (b. 1886), King Oliver (b. 1885), and "Jelly Roll" Morton (b. 1892).[13] Young had moved to Los Angeles to retire at the age of fifty-eight, having ridden the crest of the jazz age as leader of bands on the carnival-minstrel and Theater Owners Booking Association (TOBA) circuits, and at dances in the Deep South, Upper Midwest, and Great Plains regions.

The very name New Orleans Strutters, one of the professor's outfits, represented Young's efforts to capitalize on and honor this city's music tradition. Young was photographed with the band and its entourage, which included singers, dancers, and blackface minstrels, at the Lexington, Kentucky, State Fair in 1924.The makeup of the band in this photograph is noteworthy: The professor's wife, Sarah (c. 1895–1943), was on bass or baritone saxophone; his oldest son, Lester (1909–1959), on tenor saxophone; his daughter, Irma (1912–1993), who also played saxophone, sang, and danced; and his youngest son, Lee (born 1914), was a singer and dancer who appeared in blackface and top hat. Two nephews played saxophone and trombone. The New Orleans Strutters also included a number of adolescents whom he picked up along the way after promising their parents that he would teach them music and look after them as if they were his own children.[14]

Before their westward migration, the professor and his family became accustomed to living and traveling in style. The Ellington and Calloway bands toured in their own train coaches in the 1930s, but Professor Young had done so a decade earlier. His daughter recalled: "Papa had a stateroom . . . and with a stateroom, you could cook and live there, too. The whole train. A whole car . . . [with] berths upper and lower, so my two brothers slept together and I slept by myself. Mama and Papa down . . . in the berth, downstairs."[15] This was also a way of avoiding the restrictions of Jim Crow in the South; Professor Young was known for hating racial discrimination, and this probably played a role in his choice of Minneapolis and Los Angeles as places to reside as the jazz decade came to a close.[16]

The style in which the professor lived was also indicated by the fact that, when on their own—apart from the carnival-minstrel trains—his bands traveled by automobile from one location to another. Professor Young could not drive, but always found someone to perform this task. He usually had a chauffeur; Otto "Pete" Jones, the band's trombonist and later Irma's husband, did much of the driving in the Midwest. In Los Angeles, his driver was Napoleon Whiting, Irma Young's stage partner.

Shortly after the Young family and its entourage arrived in Los Angeles, the professor went into gear and placed his teenage son, Lee, in the Apex as a dancer and singer. The Labor Board, however, cracked down and removed the minor from the night club scene.[17] In 1933, Irma Young was advertised on an Apex billing with Ernestine Porter.[18] The following year the professor and his family lived at 1706 S. Central Avenue, next door to the Black musicians' union at 1710 (outside of New York City, unions were

The Professor's daughter Irma Young danced, sang, and played saxophone during a show business career that spanned three decades. Among her memorable roles was that of "Bo-Peep," one of the three sisters in The Hot Mikado, *a jazz version of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta.*

Courtesy of Crawford Brown

segregated until the early 1950s); this proximity underlined the professor's close ties to the southern California music scene.[19]

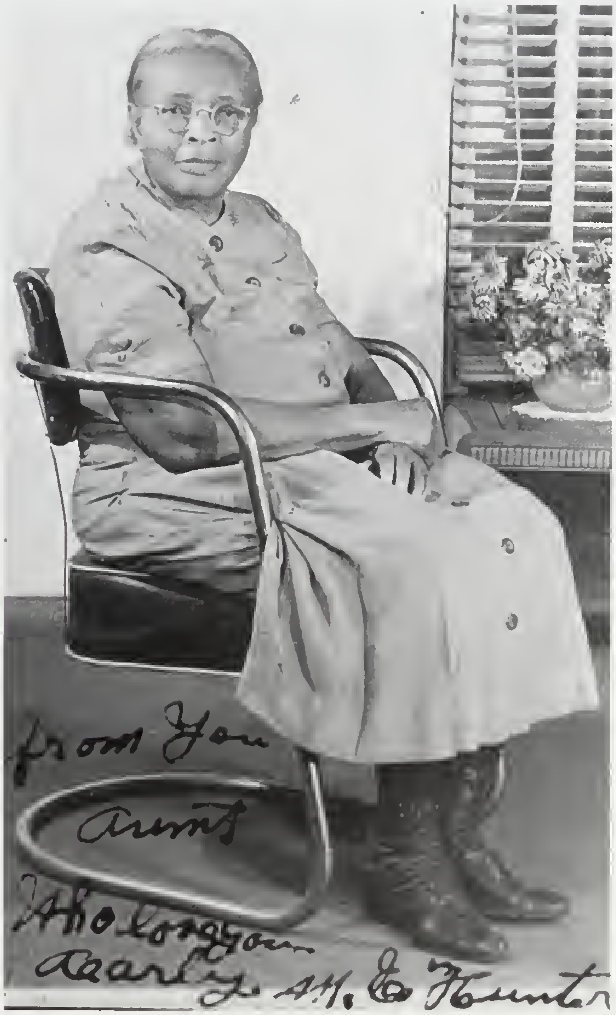
In 1936 the Young household at 1706 S. Central consisted of three generations: Willis and Sarah; his widowed sister Mary ("Aunt Mamie") Hunter; his daughter Irma's two children, Marth and Crawford ("Brownie"); and the professor's grandchildren from an earlier marriage, Lucille, Alvin, James, Esther May, and Martha Ann Tolber Every member of the household was involved in music and the professor's activities with the exception of his sister, Aunt Mamie ("Sugar Pie" t the grandchildren), a church mother who sang at Ward African Methodist Episcopal. His wife, Sarah, recalled as a "very very aristocratic lady," from Texas, played banjo with them and sewed costumes for the dramatic presentations at a clu on Main Street. After leaving the household, Irma continued her involvement in music, playing th role of "Bo-Peep," one of the three sisters in *The Hot Mikado*, a jazz version of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, when it was staged in Los Angeles. Lee Young, who left the household during the swing era, played drums in the Los Angeles bands of Papa Mutt Carey, Buck Clayton, Eddie Barefield, and Fats Waller.[20]

Willis Young was a stern disciplinarian, a moral exemplar with no vices except, perhaps, for his love of sweets and suits of clothes. He was always dressed up, although he wore "one of these fancy robes" around the house. He neither swore—the closest was an occasional "dadgummit!"—drank, nor smoked. While he was religious, the dominating passion in his life was "music, music, music . . . music." In spiritual matters, Aunt Mamie presided, and she was also exempt from the rule that everyone in the house was to learn an instrument. His religiosity became more apparent when, after a stroke, he joined Father Divine's Universal Peace Mission movement. His authority was such that "when he converted to Father Divine," his grandson explained, "the whole family was converted." Previously, the family "played at most twice a week [at St. Paul's Baptist Church], now we played almost every night in a different Father Divine mission."[21]

Professor Young's musical tastes were far-ranging—the bands he led had played all kinds of popular music. The selections he presented in church were "not of the church, really, but not necessarily of the world either," his grandchild, Lillian Tolbert, recalled. He preferred cornet, the typical New Orleans band leader's instrument, but played whatever was needed in his band or anyone else's at the time. James Tolbert claimed "my grandfather played jazz," and another grandchild, Martha Young, argued that he insisted on the importance of that swing quality characteristic of all good African American music wherever and whenever he conducted his band, in church or for dancers. The professor also listened to radio broadcasts of the swing bands of the era—Fletcher Henderson, Jimmy Lunceford, and Count Basie.[22]

He was the archetypal music professor, one who lived and breathed music, turning fans and family into musicians, arranging compositions and writing music while carrying on a conversation about something else. In a rare recollection by Lawrence Douglas Harris, a musician interviewed by the William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University, Harris described the professor as one who ,"could write an arrangement while in conversation, writing the parts before he wrote the 'cue sheet' [score], which he might write after he had written the parts."[23]

When he left his studio where he wrote music at 1706 S. Central, Professor Young invariably wore a suit, shirt, tie, and hat. He had more than a hundred suits and a number of silk shirts. A soft-spoken gentleman, he "always knew exactly what to say."[24] The professor would "walk all the way downtown," and, "although we had very little money," somehow he frequented the barbershop every day to have his daily shave and his head massaged (he was bald).[25]



Mary Elizabeth Hunter, the Professor's older sister, joined the Young family in Los Angeles. "Aunt Mamie," also known as "Sugar Pie" to the grandchildren, sang at the Ward Avenue African Methodist Episcopal church but did not participate in other family musical activities.

Courtesy of Crawford Brown

His business acumen was considerable. A grandchild reminisced, he "was a manipulator as far as music was concerned and the money." His connections were such that he obtained a job for "Aunt Lillian," his daughter from a previous New Orleans marriage, at Gold's Furniture Store after she migrated to Los Angeles in 1936. Also, "we never felt [the effects of the Depression] stomach-wise, because there was always something on the table." At that time "a lot of people were in the bread lines . . . [but] we always had something to eat." Although the professor liked to cook, his wife prepared dishes of what later would be called "soul food"—"greens, ham hocks, neckbones, chicken, sweet potato pies, lemon pies, [and] peach cobblers." During hard times she cooked "the best [pork] skins you ever had in your life" or boiled skins with red beans and rice.[26]

The professor's sense of dignity, self-confidence, and persuasive powers permitted him to "win [people] over confidentially," to recruit teenage students for his bands, and to procure jobs for himself and his family in Los Angeles during the Depression. He also knew how to talk to the "hustling people," such as when he was a school teacher in Bogalusa, Louisiana, and needed money for the school. He was "absolutely the autocrat of all times" in his South Central household and on the East Side, as the area was known. One of his grandchildren explained, "you could not be in his house and not play some instrument." Some of them learned more than one so they could fill in as needed. He was kind of a "roving consultant" for the W.P.A., James Tolbert explained, who would upbraid derelict musicians on the spot. Once in the park he approached a band member, and "I saw him . . . snatch this guy's horn out of his hand and tell him about the proper care of his instrument."[27]

Professor Young's discipline concerning music education was unbending. When he stopped that musician in the park, "he took his handkerchief and spit, and took a little section of the man's bell of the horn, and just shined it . . . and showed him the contrast. . . . Then he told him how his shoes weren't shined!" James Tolbert maintained, "to my grandfather, all of that was a part of the musicianship."

His ability to convince salesmen to provide him with musical instruments became the stuff of legend in family oral traditions. Lee Young recalled that his father never had any trouble providing him with an instrument even though, as a youngster, he frequently expressed his desire to switch. James Tolbert contended, "my grandfather was the kind of guy who could go down into the music stores with no money, and the proprietor would already have told [salesmen] . . . '*Do not let this man have any credit.*'" Professor Young's winning ways and silver tongue "would mesmerize them," and as a result, anyone studying under him had "a very good instrument." This business experience and confidence served the family well in 1936 he was able to provide comfortable accommodations for several grandchildren when they joined the homestead on South Central.[28]

His musical versatility and leadership abilities permitted him to work as a band leader for all occasions. "Papa always did have some kind of a band because he used to play for a burlesque show down on Main Street. . . . The Mills Brothers ran it." Furthermore, he could be counted on to fill in whenever a band needed another musician on short notice. While Professor Young was never recorded, he led bands in the local park on Twenty-second Street off of Central Avenue, where "they had the Sunday afternoon things, [when] . . . the older musicians get together over at Ralph Schneider's . . . and also [at the] Twenty-second Street playground." Then too, he conducted the St. Paul Baptist church choir; several choir members were from his household. When his grandchildren from an earlier New Orleans marriage came to Los Angeles to stay with him, they, of course, came under his tutelage, serving as the nucleus of the family band and the choir. "We all sang," the boys learning trumpet and trombone, and the girls studying piano and often also playing saxophone.[29]

Willis Young "taught an awful lot of kids in the neighborhood . . . on Central Avenue," charging fifty cents a lesson. "He would have taught them for nothing," but "he just thought that you should pay for something if you get it." Knowing of Willis Young's favorite dishes and his sweet tooth, neighbors might exchange a chicken dinner or "a six-layer cake if they didn't have the money" for music lessons for their prospective student. In this respect, Professor Young was like a "country doctor, by that meaning they all knew Papa" on South Central Avenue and on the East Side.[30]

When he donned his "music hat," so to speak, his grandchildren addressed him as "professor," and they knocked quietly at his studio door when they were ready to demonstrate mastery of their lesson. While he worked on the band's arrangements during the day, they attended the local schools, but, James Tolbert added, "he didn't tolerate any lagging behind [after] school. You came straight home."

Once home they came under the professor's regime. When they walked in the door, he handed them each a piece of music "every single day." This was something he had prepared for them, "some new arrangement of an old song, or sometimes a completely new song." He "was very formal," and "absolutely intolerant about mistakes." When the unlucky pupil made "even the slightest mistake [in music] . . . don't even try to apologize . . . Just go back to your room." Moreover, "nobody in the house could eat until everybody had their part." After dinner and chores, "everybody came together . . . and the whole family would play [their respective parts]."[31]

Martha Young, Irma's daughter, studied piano under the professor and reminisced about the unique musical setting next door to the union local building. "There was hardly anybody musician-wise that ever came to the musicians' local that didn't come over and see Professor, which was Papa. Everybody," she insisted, "had been to that house." The young pianist, Nat Cole, who recorded with Lester in 1942, "came to the house so many times. . . . " Musicians practiced at the union regularly, and her room "was upstairs right across from the rehearsal room," so "I saw Art Tatum from sitting in my window with my feet on the roof. . . . I saw Lionel Hampton." She recalled the house as being "full of a lot of childhood memories of my cousins . . . of the good times, of the music that we played [in] the little family band," which had jam sessions every Friday.[32]

LeRoy "Snake" Whyte in 1991. Whyte was a contemporary of Lester Young who played in some of the same ensembles and who moved through jazz circles in Los Angeles. Whyte played trumpet for the Blue Devils, which included Lester Young on saxophone. He moved to Los Angeles in the late 1930s, leading bands, arranging music, and forming a record company.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Irma and Lee Young reported that as children they used a special language, one partly derived from the carnival-minstrel and TOBA circuits, and they also spoke some variant of pig Latin. While they recalled that this way of talking was considered nonsensical by Professor Young (though he probably understood every word), its usage in the Young household seemed unique to at least one of Basie's bassists.[33]

Rodney Richardson visited the Young household in the early 1940s; Richardson was with Basie at the time, and during one of his visits he realized that Lester Young "spoke his family's language." He explained they used English words, "but if you had never heard them talk you wouldn't know what they were talking about." However, "it was good listening." "Mother and father and cousins. . . . Every one of them. Sisters, brothers, cousins, . . . All of them talked that way. Unusual." This observation suggested how much three generations of Youngs were a part of show business and jazz and how its argot affected their family life.[34]

Martha Young's testimony corroborates Richardson's observations to some degree; she explained, "all kids usually can speak pig Latin, but my mother and her brothers had a language that couldn't nobody understand, especially when us kids were around." She emphasized how "didn't nobody understand it but them," adding, "Papa understood it, but we never did." Furthermore, "they never did teach it to us"—this last statement contradicting Richardson's, but it clearly indicated something creative in language was going on in the Young household, particularly among Lester, Irma, and Lee, whose childhoods were spent on the road. Her mother, she explained in winter of 1982, and "Uncle Lee still do it sometimes, just to see if they can do it." A professional pianist and later a band leader herself, she emphasized "I have no idea what it [their manner of speech] is, I don't even know what they call it."[35]

LOS ANGELES IN THE SWING ERA

By the onset of the swing era, usually dated from Benny Goodman's national acclaim after a very successful venue in Los Angeles in 1935, highly proficient musicians made the city home. Increasingly they originated in the Midwest and Southwest;

"Sebastian's Cotton Club"

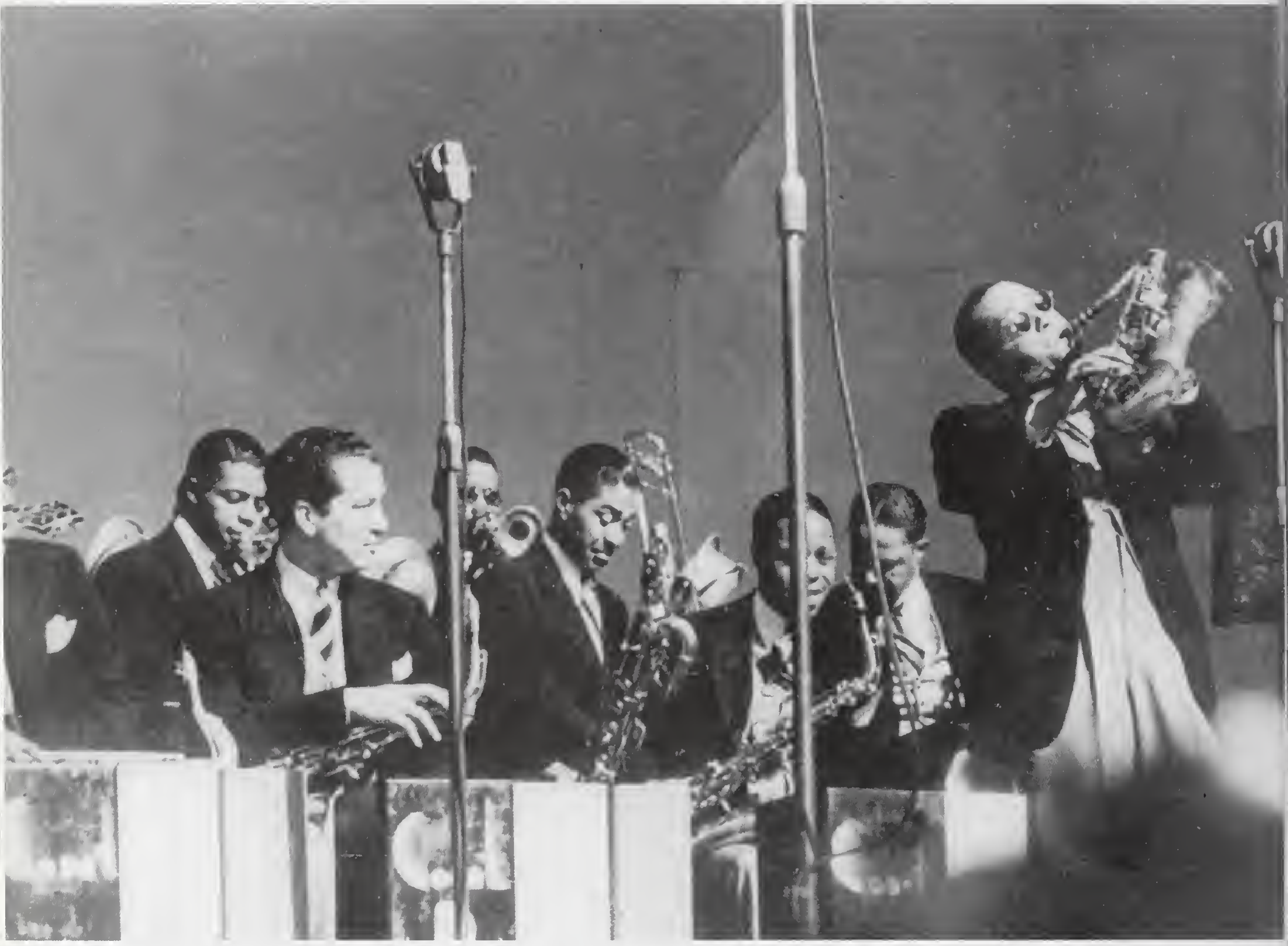
they included Eddie Barefield and Le Roy "Snake" Whyte, (Iowa), Nat "King" Cole (Illinois), Art Tatum (Ohio), Don Byas (Oklahoma), Herschel Evans (Texas), and Buck Clayton (Kansas). When Clayton returned after a two-year stint with his band in Shanghai, his plans to go on to New York were arrested by the allure of the Los Angeles jazz scene. "I noticed quite a few changes in Los Angeles" during his years away, so he reorganized his former band "and had no trouble at all getting the guys together."[36]

Aside from Lionel Hampton's big band, with its "Flying Home" hit, California has not been known for producing the kind of band or sound typically treated in the history of jazz. Ted Gioia's *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz in California, 1945-1960* begins with the end of the war; the earlier years are "beyond the scope of this book."[37] There are, for example, from other urban sites, the Chicagoans, the Kansas City bands, and New York and east coast aggregations such as Fletcher Henderson and Duke Ellington. On the other hand, San Francisco is closely connected with the New Orleans revival of the World War II era, when Kid Ory and Mutt Carey joined other New Orleans citizens to reintroduce the roots of the music. In the process, Bunk Johnson was brought out of retirement from Louisiana's rice fields and rode the tide of the Crescent City renaissance. While not known for their name bands, Los Angeles musicians manned eastern and southwestern bands and contributed to the popularity of the music overseas and in films.[38]

In the early 1930s, whites opened a jazz club in nearby Culver City to rival the Club Alabam. Sebastian's Cotton Club attracted the city's movie stars and celebrities who wished to dine, dance, and hear the latest jazz in the "most lavish and best attended" spot in the city; it was said to be

FACING PAGE: *Competing with the jazz clubs on Central Avenue was Sebastian's Cotton Club in Culver City. It attracted movie stars and celebrities who wished to dine, dance, and hear the latest jazz. Trombonist Lawrence Brown compared it to the Cotton Club in Harlem, "to me, Sebastian's Cotton Club out in Los Angeles was much more glamorous."*
COURTESY LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY.

RIGHT: *Black entertainers performing in Los Angeles stayed at the Dunbar Hotel on Central Avenue. It was a hub of the music community: Lester Young and other musicians socialized in the barbershop during the day. In 1928 the fashionable hotel was host to the first NAACP convention to be held in the west.*
AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

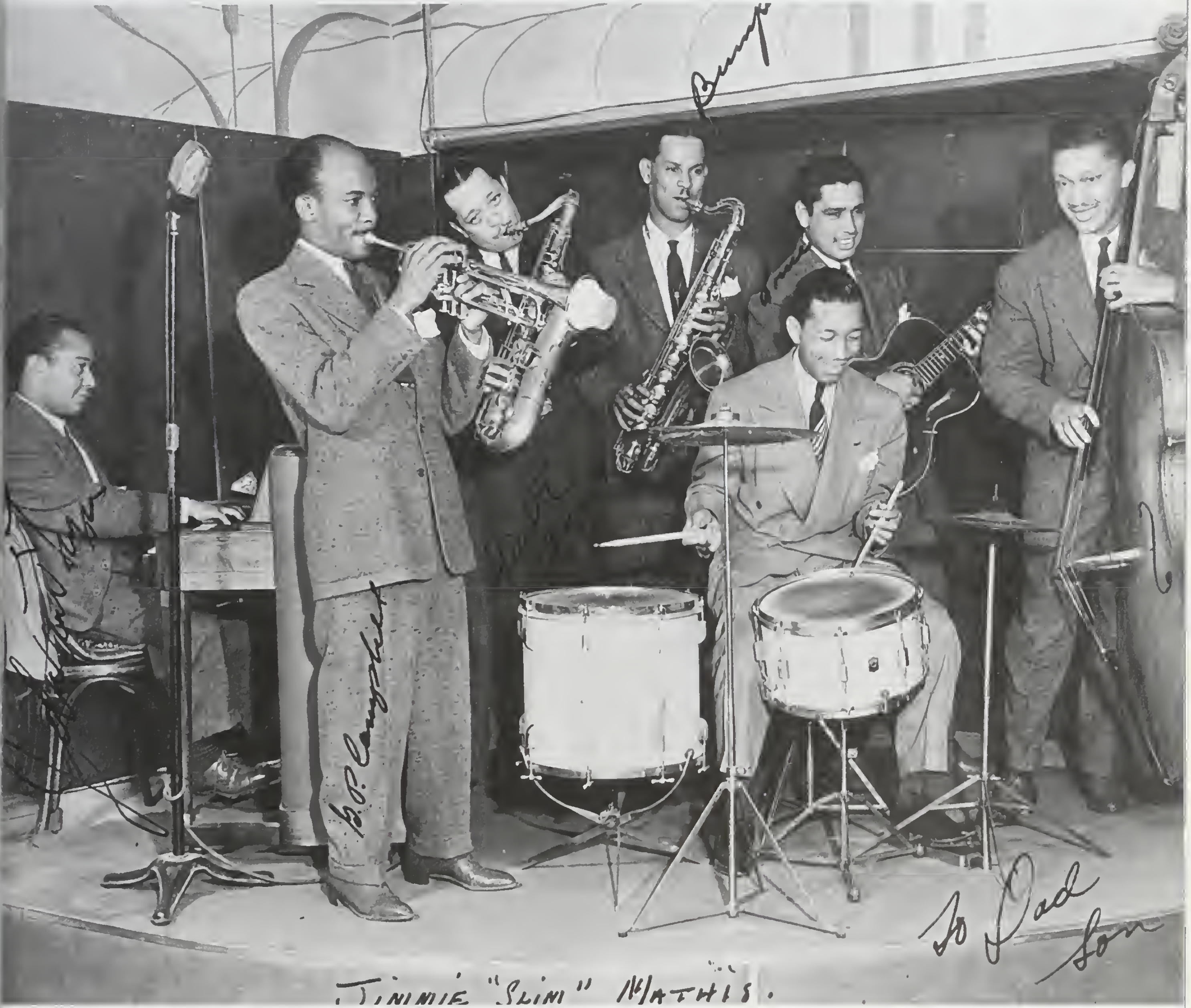


Above: *Here Lester Young "leaps in," soaring above Count Basie's ensemble. Young's unique way of holding his horn and wearing sunglasses indoors was imitated by other musicians. Other reed players include Buddy Tate (left), Earle Warren, and Jack Washington.*

Courtesy Institute of Jazz Studies

Facing page: *Brothers Lee and Lester Young played together in the early 1940s before Lester was drafted. In 1941 the ensemble included Arthur Twyne (piano), G. P. Campbell (trumpet), Lester Young, Hubert "Bumps" Meyers (tenor sax), Louis Gonzales (guitar), Lee Young (drums), and Red Callender (bass).*

Courtesy Mary Lou Callender



To Dad
Son

Jimmie "Slim" Mathis.

the "equal of modern Las Vegas" with its club acts, floor shows, and gambling rooms in the rear. Marshal Royal, whose family came to Los Angeles before the Youngs, recalled "all the movie people of Hollywood came to Sebastian's Cotton Club at one time or other." "Just about everybody that you could think of that was in big time show business came [there] because it was the biggest nightclub in the world, sizewise, and it had first-class entertainment." By 1937, however, it felt confident enough to release its Black band, led by Les Hite, and to make its bid for "the class of people . . . not particularly seeking a colored show." It initially made its reputation, however, as a venue for the latest in jazz.[39]

Ellington, Armstrong, and Calloway came to Los Angeles to make films. The reception that the city accorded Cab Calloway the year after his movie short, "Cab Calloway's Hi-de-ho," indicated how much the music was familiar to Angelenos and considered to be an important part of its official culture. The band leader visited the West Coast in late 1935 and was "welcomed . . . with honors befitting a king." When he, his wife, and fifteen band members departed from Union Station, they were followed by the city's crowds "in a long parade headed by a police motorcycle escort."[40]

The reception that he received from the city council was perhaps unparalleled in the city's history. When he entered the chambers of that governing body, he was asked to sing, but demurred, pointing out there was no piano. Finally, he complied with the request when his band agreed to second him, and they performed their hit song, "Minnie the Moocher." "It was the most unusual occurrence that has ever happened in the council chambers of Los Angeles."[41]

Los Angeles included jazz bands in its parades as well as in city council chambers because entertainment was so much a part of its life's blood and also because of the connections of many of its African American citizens with New Orleans. In 1937 the Labor Day parade through the African American district was an important occasion. Local 767 of the American Federation of Musicians participated in the parade and "really stole the show." Composed of thirty-three musicians, they played six trumpets, six trombones, ten saxophones, three bass horns, one bass drum, three snare drums, and four guitars. Former Calloway bandsman Eddie Barefield, on clarinet, led the band. As they marched from Pico to Broadway, "crowds [went] wild to the tempo of their swing music."[42]

Approaching city hall, "the band renewed its fervor, played possibly with more swing than ever before . . . a genuine jam session." The city's mayor "stood up in his seat to wave official welcome . . . inviting them to the reviewing stand." Indicative of the city's appreciation of the music, a genuine free-spirited revelry followed. The band "literally 'went to town' there and kept up the gay sessions for hours until the whole front of Los Angeles's city home and its otherwise dignified city fathers were shimmying and hi-de-hoeing as Central Avenue habitues might have done."[43]

Thus in 1936, when Lester, the professor's oldest son, visited the Los Angeles household, having traveled by car from Kansas City to visit his ailing father, he found a rich Los Angeles jazz scene. At this time he was a member of the Count Basie Band that went on the road to Chicago and New York later in the year. He came again to the West Coast with the Basie band in 1939 and then, in 1941, settled there, having left Basie.

Lester's visits were a very special occasion in the family and also in the Los Angeles jazz community. To the family, he was the exemplar of their music traditions and certainly Professor Young's best-known pupil. When his niece, Martha, saw Lester with the Basie band in the newsreel at the Lincoln Theater at Twenty-third and Central, she raced home to inform the others. "I came home excited about seeing Uncle Bubba [Lester] in the newsreel and [Professor Young] went to the show, just to see the newsreel." She reminisced, "when Uncle Bubba was coming home . . . he was [to the nieces and nephews] a king." They got to stay up late with him to play pokeno. A pianist who often played for the choir and for church teas,

CENTRAL AVENUE: "THE BROWN BROADWAY"

Los Angeles Public Libra

"I'm in the land of sunshine, standin' on Central Avenue
I'm in the land of sunshine, standin' on Central Avenue
I was doin' allright, till I fell in love with you
Never had so much sport, babe, anywhere in my life
Never had so much sport, honey, anywhere in my life
Till I fell in love with you and found out you were somebody else's wife."[1]

Harry Levette, a columnist for Los Angeles's premier Black newspaper, the *California Eagle*, defined Central Avenue as "the 'Brown Broadway.'" And indeed from about 1910 to the 1950s, Central Avenue was the thriving lifeline that ran through the heart of segregated Los Angeles's Black community.

In contrast to oppressive conditions in the South and major urban centers in the North and Midwest, Blacks in Los Angeles could find jobs and buy their own homes, although not with the same freedom as European American residents. Confined to a corridor south of downtown Los Angeles by restrictive housing covenants that excluded Blacks (as well as Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican Americans) from buying homes in many neighborhoods, the African American population nonetheless developed economic opportunities in its own community.

Black-owned businesses included the Somerville Hotel (renamed the Dunbar Hotel in 1929), which was one of the finest hotels serving Blacks in the United States. "Big modern office buildings elbowing tumbledown shacks," Levette further described Central Avenue in 1932:

> "Eat shops, in rows—Chicken markets, chicken markets, chicken markets—Missions, Speakeasies, black frocked ministers—Flashily dressed furtive-eyed racketeers . . . colored and white children arm in arm, no race hatred yet—An "Amos" lunch room—a "Madam Queen" barbecue stand—Second hand stores, gilded emporiums, colored banks—A wonderful colored life insurance building, colored gas stations—A score of colored drug stores."[2]

Banks, insurance offices, lunch rooms may have catered to residents during the day but it was at night that Central Avenue became a social and cultural magnet for southern Californians of all colors and ethnic groups. Its jazz clubs led musical taste through its influence on the entertainment industry and its contribution of band members to touring ensembles. Central Avenue's music scene weathered Prohibition and the Great Depression in style and boomed during the World War II economic upswing in southern California.

Pressured by a concerted campaign by LAPD chief William H. Parker, nightclubs were raided and closed down. Paradoxically, the relaxing of restrictive covenants in the 1950s led to the breakup of Central Avenue as a focus for the Black community. By then, Central Avenue had become "just another street."[3]

Jazz at the Philharmonic: Mel Powell (piano), Lester Young, Dizzy Gillespie (trumpet), Willie Smith (alto sax), Billy Hadnott (bass), and Lee Young (drums). The JATP was the first successful touring review to come from Los Angeles, and it frequently played in Europe as well as the United States.
COURTESY OF LEE YOUNG

Martha "was . . . too [much in] awe of Lester . . . [to] let him hear me play."[44]

When he arrived late that summer in 1936, prior knowledge of "that ace of tenor men" impressed the locals, because "the other night at the Breakfast Club the cats decided to get together and have a real old eastern jam session in [his] honor," reported Freddy Doyle, a columnist for the *California Eagle* and a musician as well. The session included saxophonist Eddie Barefield, with whom Young had played in Minneapolis in the late 1920s, trombonist Tyree Glenn, pianist Art Twyne, and "some ofay [white] tenor man who was really out of his class," along with Young. As Doyle recounted, "those cats really had a ball until the boss of the place made them break it up just as I was getting in the groove." He concluded that "while it lasted it was tops."[45]

Besides informing readers of the local jazz scene, Doyle employed the swing slang, jive talk, or hip (hep) vocabulary popularized by Cab Calloway and *New York Amsterdam* News columnist Dan Burley as well as Lester Young. Earlier that year Doyle greeted his readers with "Hi, Gang, everything is mellow and mild so 'latch' on and swing with me." The next year, reporting on the Basie band's successes at New York's Roseland, he reminded his readers of Young's Breakfast Club performance: "I was fortunate to hear this 'cat' beat out some fine horn and believe me he had all the 'stuff' that I had been hearing of." Doyle seemed confident that anyone who read the column would not only understand the slang he used but would, in fact, prefer this language for the specific subject at hand.[46]

Doyle's column indicated that both swing music and swing slang were as current in Los Angeles as in the more famous jazz cities. Like the music of Calloway and Armstrong, the jive vocabulary and syntax were spread by families as well as by individuals, and it seems that Young's special talent in the area of swing slang or jive talk was spurred by his siblings and their lives as child performers.

Lester Young, Count Basie's premier saxophonist, went to Los Angeles for other reasons than simply to visit his sick father; he appears to have been authorized to find saxophonists for the band at a crucial time in its evolution—shortly before it headed for Chicago and New York City. Caughey Roberts, replacing Buster Smith, and Herschel Evans filled out the Basie reed section. Basie's idea of two tenors led to his placing Evans opposite Young in the reed section, but Buck Clayton had two tenors in his Los Angeles band two years earlier. Both Roberts and Evans were well known in Los Angeles for playing with local musicians and, in the case of the latter before his migration, several southwestern bands in Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas City.[47]

Then too, other Basie band members were familiar with Los Angeles, trumpeter Buck Clayton having hoboed there from Parsons, Kansas, in the late 1920s while he was in high school. He found a congenial jazz milieu, perfected his craft, befriended a number of Los Angeles musicians, and returned a year or two later to take up residency and lead a band. In 1934, Clayton received word of the need for a jazz band in Shanghai, rounded up a group of west coast musicians, and headed for that port city where he performed and lived for two years before returning to the U.S.[48]

Clayton, Evans, and Roberts were Los Angeles residents before joining Basie, which went on to become one of the exemplars of the Kansas City swing tradition beginning in the late 1930s and continuing to this day. It is also noteworthy that when Basie needed a sax section leader in the 1950s, he turned to Los Angeles's alto saxophonist Marshal Royal, who was the straw boss for the

Billie Holliday gave Lester Young his nickname of "Prez," short for "President of the Tenor Saxophone." She often performed with Lester and Lee Young and claimed he was her favorite saxophonist.

COURTESY MARY YOUNG COLLECTION

band for a number of years. Clayton first heard of Lester Young from Evans, who "sometimes . . . would call up [on the telephone from] the Reno Club in Kansas City while Basie was playing on the stand and hold the telephone receiver up to my ears so that I could hear the band swinging."[49]

Moreover, Los Angeles was the birthplace of the first really successful touring jazz review, Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic (JATP), which started at the Philharmonic Auditorium in 1944. It was frequently allied with progressive causes; the first JATP was in the tradition of these progressive politics: It was a benefit for the Sleepy Lagoon case in which several Mexican-American youth were charged with a murder. Granz's motto concerning himself and the musicians stressed equality: "Wherever we go, we go together"—in other words, first-class treatment all the way for everybody. This meant nondiscrimination clauses in JATP contracts with Southern bookers so that they would not have to perform before segregated audiences down South.[50]

From the vantage point of the Young family, however, JATP was partly their doing, and this is said without taking any credit from Norman Granz, the sparkplug and financier of the traveling review which included in different years Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Roy Eldridge, Ella Fitzgerald, and others. Both Lee and Lester Young were active in the Los Angeles jazz scene in 1941 and 1942 in a band led by the younger brother. They performed at Billy Berg's, the Trouville, and the Capri at La Cienega and Pico before traveling to the Hickory House in New York City in mid 1942.[51]

At that time musicians liked to jam in clubs—Minton's in New York City was famous for this activity, as was the Trouville in Los Angeles—Lee and Lester were among them. Nat Cole often played piano with Lee, Lester, George "Red" Callender, and Hubert "Bumps" Myers. From time to time Lionel Hampton and Jimmy Blanton, Ellington's bassist, stopped by. Tenor saxophonist Don Byas, who had known the Youngs in the southwest in the 1920s, and another tenor player made four on this instrument (with Lester and Bumps) one Sunday, and "on the next Sunday," Lee Young recalled, "we had Willie Smith, Johnny Hodges, and two other alto players." Eventually Granz, who befriended Young, took an interest in forming jam sessions. "That's how the Jazz at the Philharmonic [originated] . . . I started giving Norman names of the guys to call and Norman took it a step further." Granz "went to the different clubs, and he used to have sessions at the 331 Club on a Monday night, he'd have one at the Trouville on Sunday afternoon, and then he'd have a session someplace else. And I'm certain," Lee Young averred, "this is how he came up with Jazz at the Philharmonic." Its successes were so phenomenal that in the 1950s it toured Europe as well as the United States yearly and occasionally visited the Far East.[52]

During a gig in New York, Lee and Lester's band broke up when they received word of their father's death early in 1943; Lee Young left to take care of the funeral arrangements and family matters, and he then remained in Los Angeles. His subsequent role in films indicated how important his skills were to the film industry. The Spikes brothers' contributions were noted above, but the Young brothers were also remarkable in contributing to the success of jazz in the film industry. Lee played drums for movies, as in Louis Armstrong and Mae West's *Every Day's a Holiday*, and taught Mickey Rooney how to handle the drumsticks for *Strike Up the Band*. He also obtained a contract with Columbia for three-and-a half years; he was the first African American to hold a position as a "regular studio staff orchestra member."[53]

Los Angeles's Black musicians regularly provided the soundtrack for jazz orchestras in films, and when they had the stature of an Ellington or Calloway, they made appearances as themselves in these films. Trombonist Lawrence Brown, who lived in Pasadena as a youngster, played obbligato behind the comedienne Mae West as she sang "My Old Flame" in *Belle of the Nineties*, a film featuring Ellington's orchestra. Brown also played in the Marx brothers's *A Day at the Races* and in other films. One of the most famous associated with jazz featured Lester Young; this was Gjon Mili's art film, *Jammin' the Blues*, which was nominated for an Academy Award.[54]

While MGM was producing lavish film musicals with all-Black casts such as *Cabin in the Sky* (1942) and *Stormy Weather* (1943), Norman Granz made the ten-minute short with minimal staging, and no audience evident aside from the performers (there were, however, some "exotic" camera effects and movie stars watching off screen.) His objective was to recreate a jam session, to give a casual air to the whole affair, one where musicians played, sang, and danced for themselves after hours. It was an art film instead of just an audio recording of JATP.

Lester Young's image was frozen for an eternity in the eyes of jazz fans and film buffs as the film begins with his famous pork-pie hat viewed from above so that all you can see in the spotlight are two abstract, concentric circles. After the credits unwind, the hat tilts back to reveal the face of the tenor saxophonist filling the screen. Young is featured in close-ups and in profile throughout, winning him a place in jazz film history. The particular angle of one shot—from the floor up to the seated subject—has been reproduced with other tenor saxophonists such as Dexter Gordon.

Stills from Jammin' the Blues, *an impressionistic jazz film made in 1944, show Prez taking flight. Dancers Marie Bryant and Archie Savage illustrate his rhythms in dance. On the set: Barney Kessel (guitar), Harry "Sweets" Edison (trumpet), Illinois Jacquet (tenor sax), Lester Young, Marlowe Morris (piano), and Art Simmons (bass).*
Author's Collection

The younger generation of Youngs upheld the family's musical tradition, including Crawford "Brownie" Brown, Willis Young's grandson.
Author's collection and courtesy Crawford Brown

Leonard Feather described *Jammin' the Blues* in 1945 as "the best intimate jazz ever recorded for a movie." He characterized its music as "the best small band music I heard on the coast." Rather than have dialogue and some vague semblance of a plot, *Jammin' the Blues* was "nothing . . . but well-played, well-presented, well-recorded music." More than thirty years later, David Meeker characterized the film as "probably the most famous jazz movie of all." Barney Kessel, the guitarist in the film, commented that—nearly forty years later—he respected its artistry and authenticity even more with each showing.[55]

Willis Handy Young did not live to see this famous film, as he died the year before it was shot. His remarkable influence continued after his death in the activities of his children, grandchildren, and various students—some of whom were quite famous, including Ellington trumpeter Cootie Williams; Ben Webster, who was a pianist before coming under Young's tutelage; and songwriter Clarence Williams. Few of the name pupils were linked with Los Angeles jazz, however.

In the southern California metropolis, the Youngs continued to play a remarkable role, branching out from music to entertainment law and record production. Lee Young stopped playing drums in 1962 and started producing records of artists as diverse as the Edwin Hawkins Singers to Pharaoh Sanders. His son, Lee, Jr., became a lawyer for Motown, and his grandson, Wren Brown, made a popular recording with pianist Billy Childs and starred in a television series. Other grandchildren and great-grandchildren continued the tradition in churches as well as in classical music arenas and entertainment law.

Aspects of Los Angeles's jazz history are remarkable for the light they shed on the music's evolution and popularization. For one thing, the early emergence of the music in Los Angeles, in the very first years of its known existence, must tell us something about the richness of Black culture as well as the Los Angeles scene. Before World War I, there were only seven thousand African Americans residents, and the tumultuous reception of the Original Creole Jazz Band

and those of Kid Ory and King Oliver suggests how dynamic and vital the music tradition was outside of New Orleans. In other words, you only needed a few Black people as musicians or as members of the audience to perpetuate Black music culture in general and jazz in particular at the beginning of the century.

Another significant aspect is the versatility of the idiom and the musicians. These performers were often well trained, familiar with different kinds of music, and who were, besides, arrangers, leaders, and businessmen—unlike the untutored savant still found in stereotypes of early jazz musicians. The fact that the new idiom was visible in so many different forms—on records, sheet music, in night clubs, dance halls, speakeasies, in films, in clothing styles, and in slang—heightened its influence and increased its popularity as it became synonymous with a way of life instead of simply music or good times.

Racial discrimination played a role in the dissemination of jazz, and nothing illustrates this more clearly than Los Angeles. White musicians received higher wages than Black musicians, and the union local did not challenge this order, so African Americans played in the less than respectable places because it was better than no job at all. Other victims of racial discrimination found safe havens in these jazz joints. Black musicians, for example, predominated in the taxi dance joints where one paid for the privilege of dancing with a "hostess" for a dime a dance. Filipinos, Chinese, and Mexican patrons, barred from the expensive all-white clubs by racism as well as the expense, became accustomed to the music and preferred African American musicians. Filipinos were among the first to adopt the Zoot Suit, a dress phase in the jazz world of the early 1940s; Mexican Americans followed the music of Ellington, Calloway, and Basie, and to this day, so-called Latin or salsa bands are powerful repositories of African and African American rhythms, harmonies, and instruments. In other words, familiarity with Black music culture accelerated the acculturation of colored peoples in southern California.[56]

Lester Young was known for his trademark pork pie hat and long overcoat.

Courtesy of Irving Ashby and the Institute of Jazz Studies

The early introduction of jazz in the movies was evident in Los Angeles's history and in the specific nature of the movie colony's domination of the city's life. From Hollywood, films of Armstrong, Ellington, Calloway, and Young traveled around the world, and they are seen to this present writing, lost ones occasionally surfacing. The fact that bands left Los Angeles for Asia and the islands of the Pacific, as well as Europe, is no less remarkable an instance of the effects of the city upon the world's music culture.

Ellington trombonist Lawrence Brown commented on the unique nature of the jazz scene in Los Angeles, and he was struck even more by its uniqueness after he had traveled and played in the east. When he saw New York's famous Cotton Club, he remarked, "I wasn't too impressed with the Cotton Club because to me Sebastian's Cotton Club out in Los Angeles was much more glamorous." Contrasting the two Cotton Clubs, he found the New York one very plain, while "in Los Angeles," he averred, "everything was just glamorous." After pointing out that "everything that went on in the music business in those days was really terrific," he contrasted the east with the west: "the western part of the country had a completely different atmosphere than the eastern part." Brown concluded, "it was real honey out west. . . . Things were reasonable, things were cheap."[57]

To single out Willis Handy Young is not to claim that there were not other families similar to his in Los Angeles. Another Louisianan, Alton Redd, played with Willis Young, and his daughter, Vi Redd, performed with Irma Young and later on the television special "Roots." Her aunt, Alma Hightower, was a moving force in the family and the community, a music teacher who taught generations of Angelenos.[58]

The Woodman family is one that also involved generations of musicians, and the younger ones played in "The Greatest Little Band in the World" in Watts in the 1930s; the father, William B. Woodman, Sr., was every bit as much the disciplinarian as Willis Young. One of his sons, Britt Woodman, became very well known, and his other sons played in swing bands.[59] Marshal Royal also came from a family of musicians—his father was a professor as was his uncle, his father's brother; Marshal's brother Ernie was also a musician; they migrated from Texas and Oklahoma to Los Angeles around World War I Marshal was section leader in Basie's sax section during the 1950s.[60]

Study of Willis Young and his family does reveal however, the role of such music professors in Los Angeles's jazz history and the singular importance of family in the perpetuation and development of Black music culture. Such music teachers embodied the values expressed so eloquently by Buddy Collette's grandmother, who paid for his music lessons and expressed disappointmen when he told her he was forsaking piano to take up saxophone: "I wanted you to be a great pianist, I wanted you to travel to Europe, I wanted you to do all those things. . . . Your music will take you all over if you would learn it and be something."[61] She and music teachers like her succeeded far more than they could ever conceive in directing a vibrant, powerful musical tradition that has taken its purveyors around the globe.

Dr. Douglas H. Daniels is a social and cultural historian. He was born and educated in Chicago and received his Ph.D. in history at the University of California, Berkeley. His publications include *Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco* (1980) and *Lester Leaps In: The Life and Times of Lester "Pres" Young* (2002); he translated Charlemagne Péralte: *Un Centenaire, 1885-1995* by Georges Michel; and edited (with Sucheng Chan, et al.) *Peoples of Color in the American West.* His latest book, *One O'clock Jump: The Unforgettable History of the Oklahoma City Blue Devils,* was published in 2004 by Beacon Press. A version of this paper was delivered at the Routes of the Slaves conference at the University of California, Davis, in 1995.

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NOTES

PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY: WILLIAM MULHOLLAND AND THE ST. FRANCIS DAM DISASTER BY DONALD C. JACKSON AND NORRIS HUNDLEY, JR., PP. 8–47

[1] Charles Outland, *Man-Made Disaster: The Story of St. Francis Dam* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1977), 51-150, 249; J. David Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster: Mulholland and the St. Francis Dam," *Southern California Quarterly* 77 (Spring/Summer 1995): 89, passim; David G. McCullough, *The Johnstown Flood* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968).

[2] At the rebuilt Power Plant No. 2, about a mile and a half below the dam site, there was, until recently, only a small bronze plaque commemorating the disaster. It sat off the road behind a chain-link fence and beyond notice of bypassing motorists. Now joining that plaque is a larger and more noticeable wooden sign, but, like the plaque, it is behind the fence at the power plant rather than at the dam site.

[3] Abraham Hoffman, *Vision or Villainy: Origins of the Owens Valley-Los Angeles Water Controversy* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1981); William Kahrl, *Water and Power: The Conflict over Los Angeles' Water Supply in the Owens Valley* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); John Walton, *Western Times* and *Water Wars: State, Culture, and Rebellion in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Norris Hundley, jr., *The Great Thirst: Californians and Water—A History*, rev ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 141-171.

[4] J. David Rogers, "Reassessment of the St. Francis Dam Failure," in Bernard W. Pipkin and Richard J. Proctor, eds., *Engineering Geology Practice in Southern California* (Belmont, CA: Association of Engineering Geologists, Southern California Section, Special Publication No. 4, 1992), 639-666; Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 1-109. For the 1997 interview, see Ann Lucius, "Cause of Dam Failure Discovered . . . Almost 70 Years Later," *Water Operation and Maintenance Bulletin* (June 1997): 33-36 (a copy of this Bureau of Reclamation-sponsored publication is in the Water Resources Center Archives, Berkeley). For the interview in 2000, see *L.A. Grim Society Interview with J. David Rogers about the St. Francis Dam* (Feb. 2000) included on a CD supplied by Rogers to numerous individuals, including the authors, who have deposited it in the Water Resources Center Archives, Berkeley. The interview (with a slightly different title) is also available on the Grim Society's web site (www.grimsociety.com), but there is no guarantee that it will remain there. Moreover, the contents of the interview on the web site are more difficult to cite than the contents on the CD. Both versions lack pagination, but the interview on the CD is more user friendly because numbers have been assigned to each of the questions put to Rogers and his responses. Also included on the CD are sundry images, photos, drawings, and other materials assembled by Rogers on the St. Francis Dam disaster.

[5] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 237 ("In the final analysis . . ."); Rogers, "Reassessment of the St. Francis Dam Failure," 639 ("a modern . . ."), 663; Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 82; *Grim Society Interview*, answer to question 20 ("civil engineering community").

[6] Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 88 ("rugged individualist"; "we should be so lucky . . .").

[7] *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 25, 1992 ("The Night . . ."); Margaret Leslie Davis, *Rivers in the Desert: William Mulholland and the Inventing of Los Angeles* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 264 ("exoneration"); Ruth Pittman, *Roadside History of California* (Missoula, MT: Mountain West Publishing Co., 1995), 233 ("geological knowledge . . ."); Kim Weir, *Southern California Handbook* (Chico, CA: Moon Publications, 1998), 230 ("The general condemnation of . . ."); Catherine Mulholland, *William Mulholland and the Rise of Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University Press of California, 2000), 382, note 4 ("masterly"; "apparent vindication . . ."). See also Lucius, "Cause of Dam Failure Discovered," 33-36; Kermit Pattison, "Why Did the Dam Burst?" *Invention and Technology* 13 (Summer 1998): 23-31; Paul H. Rippens, "The Night of the Flood: The Failure of the St. Francis Dam," *The Branding Iron: The Westerners, Los Angeles Corral* (No. 212, Summer 1998): 1, 3-7. Also reflecting Rogers's influence was a February, 2003, article by Henry Petroski, professor of civil engineering and history at Duke University: "many of the design features of St. Francis Dam . . . were in accordance with standard engineering practice of the time." Unlike Rogers, however, Petroski does not absolve Mulholland of responsibility for the dam's failure. He accuses him of hubris and inattention to the structure's faulty foundation: "William Mulholland and his staff had evidently so gained confidence in their mastery of the great hydraulic forces pent up behind the successful dams they had built that they began to build them with less and less attention to detail . . . ." Henry Petroski, "St. Francis Dam," *American Scientist* 91 (March-April 2003): 116 ("many of the design features . . ."), 117 ("William Mulholland and his staff . . .").

[8] No mention of a San Francisquito Canyon reservoir is made in Allan Kelly, *Historical Sketch of the Los Angeles Aqueduct* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Printing and Binding House, 1913) or Los Angeles Department of Public Service, *Complete Report on the Construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct* (Los Angeles: Department of Public Service of the City of Los Angeles, 1916). Both mention the possibility of large reservoirs at Long Valley and Tinemaha (about six miles north of the intake). Kelly, *Historical Sketch*, 29-30; Los Angeles Department of Public Service, *Complete Report*, 25, 273-274.

[9] Los Angeles Board of Public Service Commissioners,Ezra Scattergood, "Respecting St. Francis Reservoir" (Aug. 31, 1933), 2 ("provide emergency water supply . . .") in A. J. Mullen to John R. Haynes, Feb. 21, 1934, William Mulholland Collection, Historical Records Program, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Archives; *Twenty-first Annual Report*, 1922, 6, 8-9; Los Angeles Board of Public Service Commissioners, *Twenty-second Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1923* (Los Angeles: Board of Public Service Commissioners, 1923), 5-9, 23-25, 24 ("surplus water . . . ").

[10] Kahrl, *Water and Power*, 245-262, 311-312, 340-347; Hoffman, *Vision or Villainy*, 172-173, 260-261; Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of the Los Angeles Aqueduct to the Board of Public Works* (Los Angeles: Department of Public Works, 1911), 42 ("exceedingly rough . . .").

[11] Joseph B. Lippincott to John R. Freeman, March 29, 1928, box 54, John R. Freeman

pers (MC51), Institute Archives and
ecial Collections, Massachusetts Institute
Technology, Cambridge, Mass.

Scattergood's August 31, 1933, memo,
especting St. Francis Reservoir," notes
at he "strenuously opposed the construc-
on of the St. Francis Reservoir for two
asons: (a) Because . . . damage [to the city]
ch time the reservoir was filled exceed-
$100,000.00 represented by added costs
power purchased from the Southern
lifornia Edison Company on account of
king the water away from the San Francis-
ito Power Plant No. 2. (b) Because . . .
nstruction of a reservoir above Power
ant No. 1 either in the Boquet Canyon . . .
in Elizabeth Lake Canyon . . . would
ave] . . . added to the security and reliabil-
of San Francisquito Power Plants Nos. 1
d 2 instead of being a detriment to power
was the St. Francis Reservoir." Memo
tached to A. J. Mullen to John R. Haynes,
b. 21, 1934, William Mulholland Collection.

Calif. Statutes, chap. 337, sec. 2 (1917): 517-
8. Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster,"
23, reports that, prior to the selection of
e St. Francis site, Mulholland sought to
e a site in Big Tujunga Canyon but dropped
e idea because of the expense in obtain-
g control over the reservoir area. The St.
ancis site is on public land in Angeles
ational Forest and a permit for its use as a
unicipal reservoir cost relatively little.

Robert W. Matson, *William Mulholland: A
orgotten Forefather* (Stockton, CA: Pacific
enter for Western Studies, University of
e Pacific, 1976), 7; J. B. Lippincott, "William
ulholland—Engineer, Pioneer, Raconteur,"
ivil Engineering 2 (Feb.-March 1941): 106;
atherine Mulholland, *William Mulholland*,
8; Harvey A. Van Norman, "William
ulholland," *American Society of Civil
ngineers Transactions* 101 (1936): 1605.

[5] Vincent Ostrom, *Water & Politics: A Study
f Water Policies and Administration in the
evelopment of Los Angeles* (Los Angeles:
aynes Foundation, 1953), 91-100. Because
f special circumstances created by con-
truction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct,
ulholland, beginning in 1906, also
eported to a special advisory committee
ithin Board of Public Works on his role as
hief engineer of the aqueduct.

[6] Lippincott, "William Mulholland," 161.

[17] "Transcript of Testimony and Verdict of the Coroner's Jury in the Inquest over Victims of St. Francis Dam Disaster" (hereafter Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest), 615-616, Book 26902, box 13, folder 2, Richard Courtney Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA ; Ostrom, *Water & Politics*, 98-99.

[18] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 615.

[19] Lippincott, "William Mulholland," 106-107 (George Read quotes); W. W. Hurlbut, "The Man and the Engineer," *Western Construction News* 1 (April 25, 1926): 44 ("an outstanding figure . . ."); Matson, *William Mulholland*, 2 ("If Bill Mulholland should say . . .").

[20] Hurlbut, "The Man and the Engineer," 44 ("the public at large realizes . . ."; "Since time immemorial . . .").

[21] As engineers would phrase it, the resultant force (or vector) created by adding the horizontal water pressure to the vertical weight of masonry must intersect the "middle third" of the base to ensure safety in a gravity dam. If the weight of the dam is reduced (or the height of the dam is increased without widening the base), this resultant force will necessarily fall closer to the downstream face. The closer it comes to the downstream face, the greater the dam's instability. For a good discussion of nineteenth-century gravity-dam design, see N.A.F. Smith, *A History of Dams* (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1972), 195-206; and Smith, "The Failure of the Bouzey Dam in 1895," *Construction History* 10 (1994), 47-65.

[22] Describing Liverpool's 136-foot-high Vyrnwy Dam, completed in 1892, Smith, *A History of Dams*, notes that "concern about the effects of water percolating through a dam [explains] . . . why it was fitted with a network of drainage tunnels, apparently the first dam to feature such equipment" (p. 206).

[23] Early publications that discuss ways to mitigate the effect of uplift include C. L. Harrison, "Provision for Uplift and Icethrust in Masonry Dams," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 65 (1912): 142-225; and Charles E. Morrison and Orrin L. Brodie, *Masonry Dam Design Including High Masonry Dams* (New York: John Wiley, 1916), 1-15.

[24] For an insightful critique of the gravity-dam design, see George Holmes Moore, "Neglected First Principles of Masonry Dam Design," *Engineering News* 70 (Sept. 4, 1913): 442-445.

[25] Frederick H. Newell, first Director of the U.S. Reclamation Service, expressed such a perspective: "We [the Reclamation Service] have been inclined to adhere to the older, more conservative type of solid dam, largely perhaps because of the desire to have them appear so and recognized by the public as in accord with established practice." F. H. Newell to A. H. Dimock, April 16, 1912, entry 3, file: "Discussion Related to Dams," Denver Federal Records Center, Record Group 115 (Reclamation Service).

[26] For the Hollywood and St. Francis designs, Rogers speculates that "concrete was likely chosen over earth because of the relative paucity of the clayey material within the abutment materials, basic requisites for any earthfill embankment." Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 24.

[27] For Mulholland's decision that the Hollywood plans be adapted to the St. Francis site, see Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 332-334. Brief descriptions of the construction of Weid Canyon Dam appear in "Air and Water Jet Cleans Concrete Surface for Next Pour," *Engineering News-Record* 93 (Aug. 28, 1924): 351; and "Truck Hauls Plums Directly Onto Dam," *Engineering News-Record* 93 (Oct. 23, 1924): 680. See also Los Angeles Board of Public Service Commissioners, *Twenty-second Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1923* (Los Angeles, 1923), 9. One-paragraph notices of the St. Francis Dam's construction appear in "Los Angeles Building New Dam in San Francisquito Canyon," *Engineering News-Record* 94 (March 19, 1925): 497; and "St. Francis Dam Added to Los Angeles Water System," *Engineering News-Record* 96 (May 6, 1926): 743.

[28] See Los Angeles Department of Public Service, *Complete Report on the Construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct*, 250, for the organization of aqueduct construction.

[29] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 220 ("the cross sectional transfer profile . . ."). In the Inquest transcript, Bayley's name is sometimes incorrectly spelled "Bailey"). Bayley likely used as a guide Charles E. Morrison and Orrin L. Brodie, *Masonry Dam*

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Design, Including High Masonry Dams (New York: John Wiley, 1916) and William Creager, *Masonry Dams* (New York: John Wiley, 1917). For evidence that the city drew upon formulas presented in Morrison and Brodie's book when developing the St. Francis design , see *Report of the Commission Appointed by Governor C.C. Young to Investi-gate the Causes Leading to the Failure of the St. Francis Dam near Saugus, California* (Sacramento, CA: State Printing Office, 1928), 31.

[30] At times Bayley's testimony on who was responsible for aspects of the design process is confusing and contradictory. For example, after first stating that Mulholland prepared the stress diagrams for Hollywood Dam, Bayley later testified that he was responsible for them (Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 239, 346). On another occasion, he testified that it was his "understand[ing]" but "I don't know it as a fact" that William Wilkinson, a draftsman with the Bureau of Water Works and Supply, prepared the designs for St. Francis Dam. Later, William Hurlburt, office engineer for the design of St. Francis Dam, testified that those "drawings, the tracings, and computations" were made by Stevens—no first name was given. (Ibid., 219, 332). Neither Wilkinson nor Stevens was called to testify.

[31] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 225 (all quotes).

[32] Ibid., 334.

[33] Ibid., 336-337.

[34] "St. Francis Dam Added to Los Angeles Water System," *Engineering News-Record* 96 (May 6, 1926): 743.

[35] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 29-30, 230 ("the dam had been born with a stub toe"). A height of 205 feet with a storage capacity of 38,000 acre-feet is provided in "Los Angeles Building New Dam in San Francisquito Canyon," *Engineering News-Record* 94 (March 19, 1925): 497. For a chronology of the reservoir's enlargement, see typewritten transcript, "Re St. Francis Dam Disaster: Official Action Taken by the Board of Public Service Commissioners and the Board of Water and Power Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles Relative to the Saint Francis Reservoir," Outland Collection, Ventura County Museum of History and Art, Ventura, CA On a related issue, it should be noted that, in November 1924, Owens Valley ranchers took control of the Alabama Gates and began releasing water out of the aqueduct before it could flow south to Los Angeles. This disruption of the city's water supply caused much anguish for Mulholland and the Bureau of Public Service. It may simply be coincidence that the seizing of the Alabama Gates was followed a few months later by the announcement of an enlarged St. Francis reservoir. Still, the whole point of the St. Francis reservoir was to provide water storage at a point close to the city and far removed from the Owens Valley. It would make sense that the Alabama Gates incident would prompt Mulholland to find a way to increase storage capacity near the city. Whether this was the reason for raising the dam height after construction had commenced cannot be ascertained with certainty. Kahrl, *Water and Power*, 292-294.

[36] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 30-36, 46, 49, and 51.

[37] Other investigations were sponsored by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Los Angeles Board of Water and Power Commissioners, and the Santa Clara Water Conservation District.

[38] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 69, 66-68, 193-194 passim.

[39] *Report of the Commission Appointed by Governor C.C. Young*, 16 ("the foundation under the . . ."; "The west end . . ."; "The rush of water . . ."; "quickly followed . . ."); Elwood Mead, Louis C. Hill, and Lansing H. Beach, *Report of the Committee Appointed by the City Council of Los Angeles to Investigate and Report the Cause of the Failure of the St. Francis Dam* (Los Angeles: March 31, 1928), 20 ("red conglomerate"; "the sequence of failure . . ."); 24 ("defective foundations"), Los Angeles Board of Water and Power Commissioners, file WPO1-80:1, Historical Records Program, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Also in essential agreement was the investigation sponsored by the Los Angeles Board of Water and Power Commissioners: Robert T. Hill, C. F. Tolman, and D. W. Murphy, *Report on the Failure of the St. Francis Dam on March 12*, 1928 (Los Angeles: April 12, 1928), ibid., file WPO1-80:2.

[40] *Report of the Commission Appointed by Governor C.C. Young*, 16 ("With such a formation . . ."), 18 ("defective foundations"); "Engineering Committee of the City Council," 735-736.

[41] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest "Verdict of Coroner's Jury," 1-11. The "Verdi of Coroner's Jury" is a separately paginated section (pp. 1-11).

[42] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, "Verdict of Coroner's Jury," see pp. 2 and 5 for the quotations.

[43] Ibid., see pp. 2-3 and 10-11 for the quotations.

[44] Ibid., see pp. 5, 10-11 for quotations.

[45] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 750-753.

[46] Halbert P. Gillette, "Three Unreliable Reports on the St. Francis Dam Failure," *Water Works* 67 (May 1928): 177-178; Gillette, "Some Lessons Taught by the St. Francis Dam Failure," ibid., 178-179; and Gillette, "The Cause of the St. Francis Dam Failure," ibid., 181-186.

[47] Gillette, "The Cause of the St. Francis Dam Failure," 182 ("the schist on the east bank . . .").

[48] Charles H. Lee, "Theories of the Cause and Sequence of Failure of the St. Francis Dam," *Western Construction News* 3 (June 25, 1928): 405-408, 407 ("quite possibl[y] . . ."); 408 ("the immediate cause . . ."); ibid. (May 25, 1928): 343; Charles H. Lee, "Discussion" (May 25, 1928), Charles H. Lee Papers, file MS/76/1 98L14C, Water Resources Center Archives, University of California, Berkeley. For Lee's retention as a consulting engineer by the Los Angeles Bureau of Power and Light, see Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 655.

[49] "Carl Ewald Grunsky," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 100 (1935): 1591-1595; C.E. and E.L. Grunsky, "St. Francis Dam Failure at Midnight, March 12-13, 1928," *Western Construction News* 3 (May 25, 1928): 314-320; Bailey Willis, "Report on the Geology of St. Francis Damsite, Los Angles County, California," *Western Construction News* 3 (June 25, 1928): 409-413, 409 ("geological studies . . ."); Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 26 ("brilliant engineer").

[50] Grunsky and Grunsky, "St. Francis Dam Failure," 314-320, 314 ("independently"; "which are in . . ."); Willis, "Report on the Geology of St. Francis Damsite," 409-413.

[51] Grunsky and Grunsky, "St. Francis Dam Failure," 319 ("a great hydrostatic force under . . ."); 320 ("At the west end . . ."; "The

d slide . . ."); Willis, "Report on the Geology St. Francis Damsite," 410 ("the schist . . . traversed . . ."; "When it [the old land-ide] . . ."); 412 ("The east abutment was cated . . ."); 413 ("but the critical situation . .").

Grunsky and Grunsky, "St. Francis Dam ilure," 316 ("no measures . . ."; "thorough llside . . ."), 319 ("at a full reservoir . . . ").

"Sixth Report on St. Francis Dam Offers ew Theories," *Engineering News-Record* 0 (June 7, 1928): 895 ("old slide"; "lower ortion"; "became active . . ."); "Sliding ver-s Scouring," *Engineering News-Record* 0 (June 7, 1928): 879; C. E. Grunsky and . L. Grunsky, "The Grunsky Report on the ailure of the St. Francis Dam," *Engineering ews-Record* 101 (July 26, 1928): 144; *Report f the Commission Appointed by Governor .C. Young*, 18 ("defective foundations"); Essential Facts Concerning the Failure of ie St. Francis Dam: Report of the Committee f the Board of Directors," *Proceedings of ie American Society of Civil Engineers* (Oct. 929): 2147-2163. This latter article blandly oncluded that "some of the [investigating] eports express the belief that the break-up arted at the west abutment, others at the ast, and others reach no conclusion on this oint" (p. 2163). C. S. Walters, *Dam Geology* London: Butterworth, 1962), 48-49, echoes ie governor's commission in reporting that ie conglomerate on the west (right) abut-ient caused the failure because "the hill-ide on the right bank disintegrated."

[4] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 193 'A worried water-short . . ."), 194 ("Governor Iunt knew . . ."); Beverley Bowen Moeller, *hil Swing and Boulder Dam* (Berkeley and os Angeles: University of California Press, 971), 111 (without tying too close . . .").

[5] Mulholland's association with Boulder Dam s noted in Mulholland, *William Mulholland*, 79-284, 305, 316-317.

[6] The bureau's financial problems are escribed in Brian Q. Cannon, "We Are Now ntering a New Era: Federal Reclamation nd the Fact Finding Commission of 1923-924," *Pacific Historical Review* 66 (May 997): 185-211.

[7] Other members of these investigating anels included Louis C. Hill and D. C. Ienny (both consultants on the Boulder Dam oard), Frederick L. Ransome (consulting eologist for Boulder Dam), and Raymond F. Walter (the Bureau's Chief Engineer). U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, *Boulder Canyon Project Final Reports, Part IV—Design and Construction, Boulder Dam* (Denver: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1941), iv.

[58] *Report of the Commission Appointed by Governor C.C. Young*, 16 ("such a dam . . ."); 18 ("there is nothing . . .").

[59] "William Mulholland Still a Big Man," *Western Construction News* 3 (April 10, 1928): 223; Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest), 378 ("Don't blame anybody else . . .").

[60] Richard Wright, chief criminal deputy, Los Angeles County, headed an investigation of the "rumors, suspicions that dynamite might have caused the destruction of St. Francis Dam." Among those rumors was one triggered about a year earlier when "an officer received a telephone message from some unknown party stating that there were men on the way from Inyo County for the purpose of dynamiting St. Francis Dam." Wright uncovered no credible evidence to support that rumor or any others. Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 546 ("rumors, suspicions . . . "); 546-547 ("an officer received . . . ").

[61] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 16 ("We overlooked . . ."); 23 ("I have a suspicion . . ."); 25 ("Vulnerable against . . ."); 376-377 ("I have a very strong opinion . . ."), 377 ("tell us"); Catherine Mulholland, *William Mulholland*, 328 ("In accepting . . .").

[62] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 25 (all quotes).

[63] Ibid., 379, 380 (all quotes).

[64] Ibid., 379 ("my men . . ."); 380 ("How much . . ."; "Didn't spend . . ."; "over the mark . . .").

[65] Ibid., 621-623 (all quotes).

[66] "Wilbur Fisk McClure," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 91 (1927): 1106-1109; Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 379 ("I think there was . . ."). Exactly when McClure made his half-day visit to the dam site is uncertain, but it likely occurred in December 1924 when he was working to help resolve a conflict between Owens Valley ranchers and the city resulting from the takeover of the Alabama Gates. Kahrl, *Water and Power*, 294.

[67] The approval process for Littlerock Dam is described in Donald C. Jackson's, *Building the Ultimate Dam: John S. Eastwood and the Control of Water in the West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 198-205. The most commonly used name for this structure is Littlerock Dam. At times, it is also referred to as Palmdale Dam, Littlerock Creek Dam, and Littlerock Dam.

[68] "Memorandum Inspection Trip of Little Rock-Palmdale Irrigation District by A. F. McConnell, August 7, 1922." A subheading on the memo indicates that: "Order for Inspection Trip Given by Mr. McClure and transmitted by Mr. Bailey [McClure's Deputy Engineer]." Memo in the Littlerock Dam file, Division of Safety of Dams, California Department of Water Resources.

[69] "Little Rock Creek Dam. Test on Cement Specimen No. 9238. Test by Raymond G. Osborne, Los Angeles, September 22, 1922"; "Little Rock Creek Dam, E.C. Eaton, November 27, 1922"; Little Rock Creek Dam, Memorandums of Trips on December 14th and 21st, 1922, E.C. Eaton, 12/24/22 "; "Little Rock Dam, E.C. Eaton, September 11, 1923"; and "Little Rock Dam, E.C. Eaton, January 22nd, 1924" (all memos in Littlerock Dam file, Division of Safety of Dams); W.F. McClure to Littlerock Creek Irrigation District, June 5, 1924, Littlerock Creek Irrigation District files, Littlerock, California; Jackson, *Building the Ultimate Dam*, 306-307, note 75.

[70] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 87-88.

[71] "Verdict of the Coroner's Jury," Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, pp. 1-11, 9; 100 (May 10, 1928): 734-735, 735 ("infallibility in matters . . ."); *Calif. Statutes*, chap. 337, sec. 2 (1917): 517-518, chap. 766 (1929): 1505-1514. For a discussion of California's 1929 dam-safety law, see A.H. Markwart and M.C. Hinderlider, "Public Supervision of Dams: A Symposium," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 98 (1933): 828-887.

[72] For an appreciation of Outland, see Abraham Hoffman, "Charles F. Outland, Local Historian," *Southern California Quarterly* 77 (Spring/Summer, 1995): 165-180.

[73] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), chaps. 12-13; Grunsky and Grunsky, "St. Francis Dam Failure," 314-323; Willis, "Report on the Geology of St. Francis Damsite," 409-413.

NOTES

While Outland agreed with the Grunskys that uplift contributed to the dam's failure, he believed that it somehow followed, rather than precipitated, the collapse of the east abutment.

[74] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 232 ("admittedly . . ."), 235 ("Ever since . . .").

[75] Ibid., 224, 235 ("mountain of schist"; "real villain"). Outland wrote that the east abutment gave way in a "huge slide action with a mighty lateral thrust" that produced "sharp tilting of the dam's center section" (p. 224), which, in turn, broke the "western wing of the dam . . . and rocked it to the east" (p. 232).

[76] Ibid., 237 ("In the final analysis . . . ").

[77] Ibid., 34-37, 237 ("No one . . . "); Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of the Los Angeles Aqueduct to the Board of Public Works* (Los Angeles: Department of Public Works, 1911), 42 ("the [aqueduct] line . . .").

[78] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 201-202 ("Construction photographs . . .").

[79] Ibid., 29, 30 ("Changes in plans . . ."), 230 ("the dam had been born with a stub toe").

[80] Rogers, "Reassessment of the St. Francis Dam Failure," 639 ("the dam failure sequence . . .").

[81] Lucius, "Cause of Dam Failure Discovered . . . Almost 70 Years Later," 34 ("when the ground . . ."; "we know now . . . "; "the thing keeping . . .").

[82] Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 90 ("definitive work . . . ").

[83] Rogers, "Reassessment of the St. Francis Dam Failure," 639, 663 ("omission of any . . ."; "weak link . . ."); Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 82 ("omission of any . . ."; "weak link . . .").

[84] Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 27-28 ("potentially dangerous . . ."). Rogers indicates a maximum base width for the dam of 148 feet on p. 29. See also Rogers, "Reassessment of the St. Francis Dam Failure," 639; Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 29-30, 201.

[85] Outland, *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 237 ("responsibility"; "alone"); Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 81-82 ("Mulholland and his . . ."; "did not completely appreciate . . ."), 86 ("assigning blame . . ."), 89 ("larger culprits"; "a proper appreciation . . ."; "incorporation of . . ."); Rogers, "Reassessment of the St. Francis Dam Failure," 633, 639; *Grim Society Interview*, answer to question 20 ("civil engineering community").

[86] Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 28-29.

[87] To reach the dam's final height, it was necessary to build a dike (or "wing wall section") atop the ridge forming the west abutment. This approximately ten-foot-high dike involved the excavation of a shallow trench, but the dike—which played no role in the disaster—was completely separate from the main curved-gravity structure. A small concrete "cut-off wall" was built across the streambed at the dam's upstream face in order to facilitate dewatering and clearing of the foundation. This wall, however, was not a trench that extended down into the foundation; it also did not extend up either canyon wall.

[88] Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 30.

[89] Mid-nineteenth century gravity-dam design is described by Norman A. F. Smith, "The Failure of the Bouzey Dam in 1895," *Construction History* 10 (1994), 47-65.

[90] I. Davidson, "George Deacon (1843-1909) and the Vrynwy Works," *Transactions of the Newcomen Society* 59 (1987-1988): 81-95, discusses how uplift figured into the design of Vrynwy Dam. Early theorizing on uplift by German professors Lieckfeldt, Keil, and Link is noted in Serge Leliavsky, *Uplift in Gravity Dams* (London: Constable & Co., 1958), 2-7. In the United States, a prominent article cautioned engineers in 1895 that upward pressure is not "an imaginary or remote danger." See John D. Van Buren, "Notes on High Masonry Dams," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 24 (1895): 493-520.

[91] Edward Godfrey, "The Failure of the Reservoir Wall at Winston," *Engineering News* 50 (Dec. 3, 1904): 672.

[92] Edward Godfrey, "Failure of the Hot Spring Dam," *Engineering News* 58 (July 11, 1908): 55; Charles E. Morrison and Orrin L. Brodie, *High Masonry Dam Design* (New York: John Wiley, 1910), 1-3, states that "no account is made [by Wegmann] of the condition of uplift due to water penetrating the mass masonry, nor of the ice thrust acting horizontally . . . . Present practice requires, ho ever, that these two factors be considered where a structure of great responsibility i proposed . . . ."

[93] "The Failure of a Concrete Dam at Austi Pa. on Sept. 30, 1911," *Engineering News* 6 (Oct. 5, 1911): 419-422; Marie Kathern Nuschke, *The Dam That Could Not Break* (Coudersport, PA: The Potter Enterpris 1960) lists seventy-eight victims by name (p. 40).

[94] For biographical information, see "John Ripley Freeman," *Transactions of the Americ Society of Civil Engineers* 98 (1933): 1471-147

[95] John R. Freeman, "Some Thoughts Suggested by the Recent Austin Dam Failu Regarding Text Books on Hydraulic Engineering and Dam Design in General *Engineering News* 66 (Oct. 19, 1911): 462-463, 462 ("the cause that probably led . . . "uplift pressures may possibly occur . . .")

[96] Alfred D. Flinn, "The New Kensico Dam 772-779, 773 ("upward water pressure . ."); Wegmann, *Design and Construction o Dams* (seventh ed., 1922), 431-433. Freema served as consulting engineer for the Catskill Aqueduct system from 1906 until his death in 1932.

[97] Arthur P. Davis to L. C. Hill, Qct. 11, 191 ("was caused by . . . "), entry 3, box 793, Ric Grande Project, General Administration an Projects 1902-1919, Record Group 115, Federal Records Center, Denver.

[98] E. H. Baldwin, "Excavation for Foundatio of Elephant Butte Dam," *Engineering News* 73 (Jan. 14, 1915): 49-55; Baldwin, "Groutin the Foundation of the Elephant Butte Dam Engineering News-Record 78 (June 8, 1917 625-628; Arthur P. Davis, I*rrigation Works Constructed by the United States Governme* (New York: John Wiley, 1917), 243-245.

[99] Davis, Irrigation Works, 117; C. E. Grunsky "Comments on a Few Dams and Reservoirs The Military Engineer 23 (Nov.-Dec. 1930): 529.

[100] Walter Ward, "Building Black Canyon Irrigation Dam in Western Idaho," *Engineerin News-Record* 93 (Nov. 20, 1924): 818-823, 818 ("drilled into the bedrock . . ."; "the purpose of this. . .").

. W. Hanna, “Designing a High Storage
ı for the Mokelumne Project,” *Engineering*
's-Record 100 (March 15, 1928): 444-446.

Iarrison, “Provision for Uplift and Ice-
ıst in Masonry Dams,” 142-225, 221
ch of the twenty . . .”).

:. R. Weidner, “Experiments on Uplift
ssure in Masonry Dams,” *Engineering*
's 70 (July 31, 1913): 202-205; Letter
a Edward Godfrey, *Engineering News* 70
g. 21, 1913): 371.

:hester W. Smith, *The Construction of*
sonry Dams (New York: McGraw-Hill,
;), 100-109.

Morrison and Brodie, *Masonry Dam*
ign Including High Masonry Dams, 8-9
nere are several ways . . .; “in the
ndation . . .”).

Villiam Creager, *Masonry Dams* (New
<: John Wiley, 1917), 12, 13, 16-18, 25-33,
48-59, 61, 63, 68, 69, 79-98, 98-104,
119, 120-130, 135, 172.

bid., vii (“the methods of design described
’).

Arched Gravity Dams to Be Built at
ver Otay and Barrett Dam Sites,”
ineering News 74 (Aug. 12, 1916): 195-196,
(“continuous 12-[inch] sub drain . . .”).

Concrete Dam on Eel River Built on
le Foundation,” *Engineering News-Record*
(May 5, 1921): 750-754, 750 (“grouting
ɔw the cut-off wall . . .”; “carry off seep-
water . . .”). B. C. Conduit designed
tt Dam.

‘Exchequer Dam Construction Plant
lt in Narrow Canyon,” *Engineering News-*
ord 94 (May 28, 1925): 880-884.
signs “were prepared under the direction
A. J. Wiley. . .” (p. 884). A photograph of
hequer Dam showing drainage pipes
ending up the canyon walls is in folder
Charles Derleth Papers, Water Resources
ıter Archives, Berkeley.

Plant and Program on the Hetch Hetchy
m,” *Engineering News-Record* 89 (Sept.
1922): 464-468, 467 (“the [3' x 3' x 3']
ous concrete blocks . . .”). The extensive
inage system devised for O’Shaughnessy
m is documented in “Drainage System
ɔwing Galleries, Wells, and Contraction
ıts-Sheet No. 3,” signed by Michael M.
Shaughnessy in May 1919. A copy of this drawing is in folder 88, Charles Derleth Papers.

[112] Los Angeles County Coroner’s Inquest, 487-488.

[113] Ezra B. Whitman, “The New Loch Raven Dam at Baltimore, Md.,” *Engineering News* 72 (Aug. 13, 1914): 331-337; “Upward Water Pressure Test Pipes Constructed in Concrete Dam,” *Engineering News-Record* 82 (May 15, 1919): 954; “New Dam Will Double Water Supply of Portland, Ore.,” ibid. 98 (May, 26, 1927): 842-846; B. E. Torpen, “The Bull Run Storage Dam for Portland, Ore.,” ibid. 103 (Aug. 8, 1929): 204-208. Construction of the 200-foot high, curved-gravity Bull Run Dam started in May 1927. Along with grouting and a large drainage system, “a cut-off trench . . . excavated 6 feet below the finished foundation extend[ed] the entire length of the dam.” Ibid., 204.

[114] Fred A. Noetzli, “Types of Storage Dams and Their Adaptation to Western Conditions,” *Modern Irrigation: The Magazine of Applied Hydraulics* 3 (June 1927): 21 (“Conservative engineering requires . . .”). Research into how uplift acts on dams continued for decades after the St. Francis collapse. But the issue was never whether or not uplift existed or posed a threat. Rather, concern focused on theoretical means of precisely calculating uplift pressure in relation to: (a) the horizontal cross section of the dam or foundation (that is, the “area factor”) and (b) how various technologies, such as cut-off trenches, grouting, drainage wells, etc. reduced uplift pressure (that is, the “intensity factor”). See, for example, Julian Hinds, “Upward Pressures Under Dams: Experiments by the United States Bureau of Reclamation,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 93 (1929): 1527-1582; D. C. Henny, “Stability of Straight Concrete Gravity Dams,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 99 (1934): 1041-1123; Arthur Casagrande, “Seepage Through Dams,” *Journal of the New England Water Works Association* 51 (June 1937): 131-170; H. de B. Parsons, “Hydrostatic Uplift in Pervious Soils,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 93 (1929): 1317-1366; E. W. Lane, “Security from Under-Seepage on Earth Foundations,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 100 (1935): 1235-1351; L. F. Harza, “Uplift and Seepage under Dams on Sand,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 100 (1935): 1352-1406; Ivan E. Houk and Kenneth B. Kenner, “Masonry Dams—A Symposium: Basic Design Assumptions,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 106 (1941): 1115-1130; Serge Leliavsky, “Experiments of Effective Uplift Area in Gravity Dams,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 112 (1947): 444-487; L. F. Harza “The Significance of Pore Pressure in Hydraulic Structures,” *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 114 (1949): 193-289. In the latter article Harza claimed that “by deductive reasoning it is shown that under and within any concrete structure . . . hydro- static uplift acts over the entire horizontal area, instead of over one half or two thirds as commonly assumed” (p. 193). With this, he makes clear that the theoretical magnitude of the area that uplift acts on—and not the existence of uplift—comprised the issue in question.

[115] See Kahrl, *Water and Power*, 21.

[116] Jackson, *Building the Ultimate Dam*, 112, 114-115.

[117] A.J. Wiley to H.N. Savage, June 9, 1917, folder 32:1, Hiram N. Savage Papers, Water Resources Center Archives, Berkeley.

[118] Wegmann, *Design and Construction of Dams* (7th ed., 1922), 433.

[119] Arthur E. Morgan, *The Miami Conservancy District* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1951), 152-153, 161-174;,U.S. Reclamation Service, *Third Annual Report of the Reclamation Service, 1903-04* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1905), 41.

[120] Savage, “Design of the Owyhee Irrigation Dam,” 663 (“The recent . . .”). This article identifies the outside consultants as “Dr. F. L. Ransome, professor of economic geology at the California Institute of Technology, Dr. Warren D. Smith, professor of geology at the University of Oregon, and Kirk Bryan of the U.S. Geological Survey. Three consulting engineers, A.J. Wiley of Boise, D.C. Henny of Portland, and Charles D. Paul of Dayton, also passed on the site and reviewed the designs and estimates” (p. 663).

[121] William Mulholland to Arthur Powell Davis, Feb. 5, 1912, (“I requested . . . ”), file WM OF-3-13, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Archives.

[122] Allen Hazen and Leonard Metcalf, “Middle Section of Upstream Side of Calaveras Dam

NOTES

Slips into Reservoir," *Engineering News-Record* (April 4, 1918): 679-681; "Failure of Part of Calaveras Dam," *Western Engineering* 9 (May 1918): 173-174; Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 23 ("founding fathers").

[123] Michael M. O'Shaughnessy to John R. Freeman, Oct. 14, 1913, reprinted in O'Shaughnessy, *Hetch Hetchy: Its Origin and History* (San Francisco: The Author, 1934), 68-69 (O'Shaughnessy quotes).

[124] F.C. Finkle to John R. Haynes, Aug. 12, 1931, folder: L.A. Dept. of Water & Power, Consulting Engineer-Frederick Finkle, box 118, Collection 1241, John R. Haynes Collection, Department of Special Collections, Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles. Taking fourteen foundation samples and "immers[ing] a portion of each sample in a jar filled with water," Finkle noted that "some of them stood up for 10 days, but others dissolved in less than 24 hours. All of them are completely disintegrated into silt, pebbles and grit at this time." The quotations come from a newspaper clipping enclosed with Finkle's letter and the clipping includes a September 4, 1924, report from Finkle to the Santa Monica Anti-Annexation Committee. The headline on the clipping is: "SANTA MONICA WARNED OF WEAKNESS OF ST. FRANCIS DAM." See also Finkle, "Los Angeles Aqueduct Mistakes," *Journal of Electricity, Power and Gas* 34 (Jan. 9, 1915): 27-28; Gervaise Purcell, W.H. Sanders, F.C. Finkle, and Chester B. Loomis, *Report of Municipally Manufactured Cements, Los Angeles Aqueduct* (Philadelphia, [1912]).

[125] Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 82 ("weak link . . ."); Michael M. O'Shaughnessy to Edward Hyatt, Oct. 3, 1928 ("Los Angeles made an error . . . "), file: Supervision of Dams, 1928, Public Utility Commission Records, California State Archives, Sacramento

[126] *Grim Society Interview*, answer to question 23 ("Achilles heel"; "his thriftiness"; "to build enormous . . ."; "led to many aspects . . .").

[127] Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 82 ("did not completely . . .").

[128] Lucius, "Cause of Dam Failure Discovered . . . Almost 70 Years Later," 34 ("inherent redundancies").

[129] Rogers, "A Man, a Dam and a Disaster," 88.

[130] Outland, *Man-Made disaster* (1977), 167 ("KILL MULHOLLAND!"); Catherine Mulholland, *William Mulholland*, 326 ("threats were made . . ."), 327. His resignation from the Bureau of Water Works and Supply is noted in "Mulholland Retires After 50-Year Service at Los Angeles," *Engineering News-Record* 101 (Nov. 22, 1928): 785.

[131] *Los Angeles Times*, April 26-29, 1928; Catherine Mulholland, *William Mulholland*, 242-243, 330 ("for producing . . ."); Davis, *Rivers in the Desert*, 245-246; "William Mulholland—Maker of Los Angeles," *Western Construction News* 8 (Aug. 1933): 330 ("as a man of history . . ."); "William Mulholland Still a Big Man," *Western Construction News* 3 (April 10, 1928): 223; "Two Prominent Engineers Die," *Western Construction News* 10 (Aug. 1935): 240 ("sterling quality"); Los Angeles County Coroner's Inquest, 378 ("don't blame anybody else . . ."). For tributes following his death that did not mention St. Francis Dam, see *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 101 (1936): 1604-1608; *Civil Engineering* 9 (March 1939): 199.

[132] Arthur P. Davis to John Freeman, March 28, 1928; Arthur P. Davis, "Inspection Report of St. Francis Dam, March 19, 1928," 3 ("the laminated condition . . ."; "in other words . . ."). The letter and report are both in box 54, John R. Freeman Papers, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

[133] Joseph B. Lippincott to John R. Freeman, March 26, 1928, Box 54, Freeman Papers. Lippincott's supposed involvement in a post-disaster investigation is mentioned in Outland's *Man-Made Disaster* (1977), 193, but he did not participate in any reports previously noted in this article. The authors have not located any report that he helped to research or write.

[134] John R. Freeman to Joseph B. Lippincott, April 4, 1928, Box 54, Freeman Papers.

[135] John R. Freeman to Caleb Saville, March 29, 1928, ibid.

[136] *Calif. Statutes*, chap. 766 (1929): 1505-1514.

[137] A.H. Markwart and M.C. Hinderlider, "Public Supervision of Dams: A Symposium," *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* 98 (1933): 828-887; Chuck B. Wong, California Division of Safety of Dams, to Norris Hundley, July 15, 2002; Irving Sherman to Jon Wilkman, Norris Hundley, and others, Nov. 14, 2001 ("If it had no been . . ."), copy in the possession of the authors.

[138] The stultifying effect of the 1929 law o multiple-arch dam design is described in Jackson, *Building the Ultimate Dam*, 24 242. N. J. Schnitter, "The Evolution of the Arch Dam—Part Two," *Water Power and Dam Construction* 28 (Nov. 1976): 19-2 observes that in California "the number o new arch dams as well their proportion in relation to the other types decreased sharpl in the 1930s" (p. 19).

[139] Hundley, *Great Thirst* (2001),

LOS ANGELES'S JAZZ ROOTS, PP 48–70

[1] Peter Tamony, "Jazz: The Word, and Its Extension to Music," *Americanisms: Conten and Continuum* 23 (December 1968): 13, on the term's first appearance in print in th San Francisco *Call Bulletin* (March 6, 1913) the term was used not in a musical context but in that of a baseball training camp, wher it meant "to speed things up."

[2] Neil Leonard, *Jazz and the White Americans The Acceptance of a New Art Form* (Chicago University of Chicago Press, 1962); the author has not found any dictionaries of jazz that list Willis Handy Young. On the Black Los Angeles music scene, Tom Reed, *The Black Music History of Los Angeles—Its Roots* (Los Angeles: Black Accent on LA Press 1993); and Bette Yarbrough Cox, *Central Avenue—Its Rise and Fall* (1890-1955) including the *Musical Renaissance of Black Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: BEEM Publications, 1993); also, Lawrence Gushee, "New Orleans Area Musicians on the West Coast, 1908-1925," *The Black Music Research Journal*, 9, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 1-18. For one of the first works on New Orleans jazz, Frederick Ramsey and Charles E. Smith, *Jazzmen* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1939).

[3] Lawrence Gushee, "How the Creole Band Came To Be," *Black Music Research Journal* 8, no. 1 (1988): 83-100; Will Johnson and his Creole band were in Los Angeles in 1907, p. 93; by the end of 1913, four band members were in Los Angeles, p. 94. On Morton on the West Coast, Phil Pastras, *Dead Man Blues: Jelly Roll Morton Way Out West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). Also, see Gushee, "A Preliminary Chronology of the Early Career of Ferd 'Jelly

l' Morton," *American Music* 3 (Winter
55): 389-412 and Alan Lomax, *Mister Jelly*
l, (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1950),
ff.; Arnold Genthe, *As I Remember*
w York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1936),
-76; Chris Ellis, "Some West Coast Bands
he 1920s," *Storyville* 21 (February/March
59): 84-85; Philip F. Elwood, "The Role
San Francisco in Jazz History," *Metronome*
(August 1961): 11-15; George Schuyler,
ck and Conservative: The Autobiography
George S. Schuyler (New Rochelle, NY:
ington House, 1966), 49; Tom Stoddard,
z on the Barbary Coast (Berkeley: Heyday
oks, 1998 [original 1982]); and Douglas
nry Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanites: A Social*
d Cultural History of Black San Francisco
iladelphia: Temple University Press,
30), 144-45, on ragtime and jazz in San
ncisco in the early twentieth century.
l Holly, "West Coast Jazz," *Down Beat* 22
arch 9, 1955): 5. Frank Driggs and Harris
vine, *Black Beauty, White Heat: A Pictorial*
story of Classic Jazz, 1920-1950 (New
k: William Morrow, 1982), 182; the Driggs
ok is a good example of one that ap-
proaches the music city by city. Al Rose and
mond Souchon, *New Orleans Jazz: A*
mily Album (Baton Rouge: Louisiana
te University Press, 1984) and Samuel
Charters, *Jazz: A History of the New York*
ene (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962)
examples that focus on one city.

ose and Souchon, *New Orleans Jazz*, noted
number of Crescent City musicians who
nt to Los Angeles, pp. 93-96, 103, 105,
7, 110, 113, and 123; they included Jimmy
one, Frank Pashley, Lionel Reason, Alton
rnell, Johnny St. Cyr, Cornelius "Zue"
bertson, and Arthur "Bud" Scott.

ricktop (with James Haskins), *Bricktop*
ew York: Atheneum, 1983), 64; Driggs
d Levine, *Black Beauty*, 182.

riggs and Levine, *Black Beauty*, p. 183;
ikes believed that Adam "Slocum"
tchell introduced crying and whining in
z by imitating these sounds on clarinet;
was credited with inspiring King Oliver
d others to play similarly; Reb Spikes, Jazz
al History Program interview, Institute
Jazz Studies, Rutgers University, Newark,
, Reel 1, transcript p. 25 (hereafter, inter-
ws from this collection are referred to
JOHP).

entral Avenue Sounds: Jazz in Los Angeles
21-1956) (Los Angeles: Rhino Records, 1999), compact disc set 75872, disc one, features "Ory's Creole Trombone" and "Creole Song" (and other selections) by Ory's Sunshine Orchestra and Ory's Creole Band, respectively. The trombonist recorded with Louis Armstrong on his Hot Five recordings in 1926 and then played with King Oliver; in 1930 he returned to Los Angeles to rejoin Mutt Carey; "Kid Ory's Creole Trombone" was popularized on an Armstrong Hot Five recording; John Chilton, *Who's Who of Jazz: Storyville to Swing Street* (New York: Time Life Records Special Edition, 1978), 248-249.

[8] The Sunshine label of the Spikes brothers was designed by the famous Black architect, Paul Williams: "he was crazy about music." Benjamin "Reb" Spikes JOHP, Reel 4, p. 5; Reel 1, pp. 31-32; and Reel 3, p. 33; Reel 4, pp. 3-4 and 109-110 for information on their jazz film; on Paul Williams, Reel 4, pp. 23, 129. "Reb Spikes—Music Maker," *Storyville* 21 (February/March 1969): 101-103; Reed, *Black Music History of Los Angeles*, 44. Los Angeles City Directory, 1930, p. 1651; this restaurant has the same address as the Club Alabam. See also John Bentley and Ralph W. Miller, "West Coast Jazz in the 20s," *Jazz Monthly* 7 (May 1961): 4-7. The vaudeville showman and journalist "Ragtime" Billy Tucker reported on the Los Angeles scene in the *California Eagle* as well as the *Chicago Defender* in the early 1920s; see "'Ragtime' Billy Tucker Takes His Follies to Honolulu," *California Eagle* (June 13, 1924): 8, which reported Tucker taking his show, "Darktown Follies," to Hawaii. On the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, see H. O. Brun, *The Story of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1977). The landmark Dunbar Hotel was built by the dentist Dr. Alexander Somerville in the 1920s; see Anthony Charles Sweeting, *The Dunbar Hotel and Central Avenue Renaissance, 1781-1950* (Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA, 1992). Bruce M. Tyler, *From Harlem to Hollywood: The Struggle for Racial and Cultural Democracy* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992.

[9] Helen McNamara, "Pack My Bags and Make My Getaway: The Odyssey of Jimmy Rushing," *Down Beat* 32 (April 8, 1965): 22; Douglas Hague, "Jimmy Rushing Tells His Story," *Jazz Journal* 10 (September 1957): p. 1.

[10] For a contemporary account of Black Los Angeles, "Negro Cities–Los Angeles," *California Eagle* (December 26, 1924): 1. "Humming Bird Café Will Have Brilliant Opening Saturday Evening," *California Eagle* (June 7, 1924): 10. Curtis Mosby was mentioned in the *Indianapolis Freeman* (July 31, 1915): 5, playing drums at the Lyric Theater in Kansas City, Mo.; in 1931 he celebrated his birthday at the Apex Club # 2 at Grant and Bush in San Francisco's Chinatown, but he refused to reveal his age and explained, "he had been in the night club business for 21 years"; *Chicago Defender* (July 8, 1931): 5. Marshal Royal discusses Mosby's importance in his JOHP interview, pp. 33-34. Lawrence Brown, JOHP, Reel 3, pp. 6-7 maintained that D. W. Griffith, William R. Hearst, and "everybody . . . all those big directors used to frequent the club all the time. . . . it was a gorgeous life in those days." In 1940, the Los Angeles City Directory, p. 1405, listed Mosby as having a liquor store at 4253 S. Central, a block up from the Dunbar Hotel, and residing at 1167 1/2 E. Forty-second Street. Theo Zwicky, "The Curtis Mosby Story," *Storyville* 21 (February/March 1969): 87ff; "Club Alabam Cafe," *California Eagle* (December 22, 1933): 13 and (October 18, 1935): 4-B; Reed, *Black Music History of Los Angeles*, p. 183. When the Club Alabam reopened Halloween night of 1932, Ernestine Porter staged the floor show and the resort was "full of patrons of both races." "The real fun took place when most of the visitors had drifted on home and entertainers from night clubs began dropping in about 3 of the early crowing." The entertainers named that night were Les Hite, Baby Mack, Mae Diggs, Henry Starr, and Flo Washington; Sebastian's Cotton Club sat people at "long ringside tables;" "Club Alabam Opens Again," *Chicago Defender* (November 19, 1932): 5. Marshal Royal, JOHP, pp. 33-34 and Lawrence Brown, JOHP on Los Angeles in the 1920s; Buck Clayton,with the assistance of Nancy Miller Elliott, *Buck Clayton's Jazz World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) and Red Callender and Elaine Cohen, *Unfinished Dream: The Musical World of Red Callender* (New York: Quartet, 1985) on the Los Angeles jazz scene in the 1930s. Driggs and Levine, *Black Beauty*, p. 43. "Club Alabam Opens Again," *Chicago Defender* (November 19, 1932): 5. Dr. David Taylor kindly provided me with the information that Willis Young lived in Minneapolis in 1927, using the city directory to substantiate the family's oral history traditions.

NOTES

[11] Author's interview with Lee Young (June 16, 1982); Los Angeles City Directory, 1932, p. 2331; Sarah Young (and presumably Willis Young) lived at 9406 Baird Ave. in 1931; Sarah Young, application # 5772 for Examination as Hairdresser and Cosmetician, Secretary of State, California State Archives, Sacramento, Ca. On Lester Young in Los Angeles, see Douglas Henry Daniels, *Lester Leaps In: The Life and Times of Lester "Pres" Young* (Boston, Beacon Press, 2002), ch. 11.

[12] Daniels, *Lester Leaps In* , ch. 3. Los Angeles City Directory, 1932, p. 2331. Author's interview with Henry "Buster" Smith (August 26, 1982).

[13] Willis was old enough to be the father of Papa Mutt Carey (1892), Sidney Bechet (1897), or Louis Armstrong (1898). It is clear he knew Henry Allen, Sr., Mutt Carey, and Alton Redd; who else he might have known among the Louisianans, such as Kid Ory or Bunk Johnson, remains to be seen. Leonard Feather, *The Encyclopedia of Jazz* (New York: Da Capo, 1960) was used for these years of birth. Using the U.S. Manuscript Census, Lawrence Gushee, "Would You Believe Ferman Mouton?" *Storyville* 95 (June-July 1981), pp. 164-166 corrected Morton's year of birth from earlier reports of 1886. James Lincoln Collier, *Louis Armstrong: An American Genius* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 20-21 on Armstrong's year of birth. Willis Young was a year older than the famous composer W. C. Handy. Peter Haby, "Oscar 'Papa' Celestin, 1884-1954," *Footnote* 12 (June-July 1981): 4 claims that Orrin Keepnews and Bill Grauer, Jr., *A Pictorial History of Jazz: People and Places from New Orleans to Modern Jazz* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1966 ed.), p. 11, list Willis Young as a member of Henry "Red" Allen, Sr.'s band, but the individual in the photograph of the band does not resemble Professor Young; others have placed Young in this photo, including Martin Williams, *Jazz Masters of New Orleans* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1967): 258-259. In Whitney Balliett, *Such Sweet Thunder: Forty-Nine Pieces of Jazz* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1966): 346, Henry "Red" Allen, Jr., recalls that Young's father "and my father played together in New Orleans."

[14] Lee Young, JOHP interview ; author's interviews with Irma Young (1981, 1984) and Clarence and Leonard Phillips (1983)

[15] Author's interviews with Irma Young (1981, 1984).

[16] Author's interview with Leonard Phillips (1983) and Irma Young (1981, 1984). Information on the Minneapolis location in the Minneapolis City Directory, 1927, p. 948; more information can be located in the Department of Inspections, Office of the Inspector of Buildings (document #3167 - "Permit to Wreck Buildings"), Minneapolis, Minn. An Inspector of Buildings form revealed that the house had electricity installed in September 1926.

[17] J. Lee Anderson, "Lee and Lester, Part 1," *The Mississippi Rag* 20 (December 1992): 4, Lee Young recounts the Apex experience and his years as a dancer, singer, and musician, most of which seems to come from the JOHP interview.

[18] Club Alabam Advertisement, "Club Alabam Cafe," *California Eagle* (December 22, 1933): 13.

[19] Los Angeles City Directory, 1934, p. 1839; Los Angeles City Directory., 1935, p. 2617; author's interviews with Lucille (December 28, 1982), Alvin (February 19, 1983), and James (June 12, 1982) Tolbert, and Martha Young (February 15, 1982), grandchildren of Willis and nieces and nephews of Lester Young.

[20] Author's interviews with Lucille Tolbert, Irma, and Martha Young; see Driggs and Levine, *Black Beauty*, 191, where Don Byas and Lee Young are in the Barefield band.

[21] Author's interviews with Irma and Martha Young and James Tolbert. St. Paul's Baptist church was at 1385 East Twenty-first, and its pastor was Rev. S. A. Williams; Los Angeles City Directory, 1935, p. 1517.

[22] Author's interviews with Lillian and James Tolbert and Martha Young.

[23] Lawrence Douglas Harris interview (June 6, 1961), William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University, New Orleans; Harris was born in Texas and, like Willis Young, went to Mexico with a carnival band. He played with the professor for about a year (he is uncertain exactly when); Young played saxophone and some piano. Harris recalled the band's name as being related to New Orleans, that it was part of a "stock company." Amos White, in his Tulane interview (August 23, 1958, p. 5), remembered Billy (the professor's stage name) Young playing trombone in the seven-piece orchest of Arthur and Albert Verrett in Houma, Louisiana, in the winter of 1917.

[24] Author's interview with Clarence Phillip

[25] Author's interviews with Lillian and Jame Tolbert and Martha Young.

[26] Author's interviews with James, Alvin, an Lucille Tolbert and Martha Young.

[27] Author's interview with Clarence Phillip Lee Young, JOHP interview, Reel 5, pp. 3-4

[28] Author's interviews with Lee Young and James Tolbert.

[29] Author's interviews with Irma, Lee, and Martha Young and Lucille, Alvin, and Jame Tolbert. The Southern California Music Building was located at 808 South Broadway Los Angeles City Directory, 1935, p. 1637.

[30] Author's interviews with Lee and Martha Young and James Tolbert.

[31] Author's interview with James Tolbert.

[32] Author's interview with Martha Young.

[33] Author's interviews with Lee and Irma Young.

[34] Dale Smook, "Rodney Richardson Interview, Pt. 1," *Cadence* 15 (November 1989): 16-17.

[35] Author's interview with Martha Young.

[36] Buck Clayton, Buck Clayton's Jazz World, p.79. Both Barefield and Whyte played with Lester Young in Minneapolis in the late 1920s, and Whyte belonged to Walter Page's Blue Devils with Lester Young—in fact, he claimed he played a role in getting Young to join this Oklahoma City band; author's interviews with Eddie Barefield and Le Roy Whyte.

[37] Ted Gioia, *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz in California*, 1945-1960 (New York: Oxford University, 1992), 8.

[38] Floyd Levin, *Classic Jazz: A Personal View of the Music and the Musicians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 246-248, 251-254; Austin M. Sonnier, Jr., *Willie Geary "Bunk" Johnson: The New Iberia Years* (New York: Crescendo, 1977), chronicles the life of one old timer who was part of the revival. Driggs noted this revival in the context of Mutt Carey, Kid Ory, and Bunk Johnson in 1943 in San Francisco, *Black Beauty*, 196.

ucinda W. Pennington and William K. xter, *A Past to Remember: The History of lver City* (Culver City: City of Culver City, 76). Marshal Royal, JOHP Reel 3, p. 14; ebastian's Cotton Club Changes Name; ops Colored Band, Chorus," *California gle* (July 2, 1937): 4B .

'Cab Calloway Arrives for Appearance," *lifornia Eagle* (October 25, 1935): 5B. avid Meeker, Jazz in the Movies: A ide to Jazz Musicians, 1917-1977 (New chelle, NY: Arlington House, 1979), # 297. was probably in Los Angeles to make his 35 movie short, "Cab Calloway's Jitterbug rty," ibid., #298.

California Eagle (October 25, 1935): 5B. ab Calloway Arrives for Appearance."

Fay M. Jackson,"Clarence Muse leads ovie Contingent in Spectacle of Beauty," *lifornia Eagle* (September 9, 1937): 1. ab Calloway Arrives for Appearance." It interesting to note that paraders costumed different characters in Black music: "Atwell se . . . dressed immaculately in morning it, top hat, spats and cane . . . carried a ysician's bag marked 'Dr. Cure D. Blues.' white tails prancing in character of 'Papa ee Top Tall' was C. B. Johnson—the ani- ation of jazz." "The most colorful Labor ay parade in the city's history" was ported in "Thousands Parade Here," *Los ngeles Times* (September 9, 1937): part I, . 7 and 26, which mentions the white ion as leading off the parade but does t mention the Black union local.

California Eagle (September 9, 1937): 1B.

Author's interviews with James and Lillian lbert and Martha Young.

Freddy Doyle, "Musicians and Orchestras," alifornia Eagle (October 9, 1936): 10.

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Chris Sheridan, *Count Basie: A Bio- iscography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 986): 23, 28; in spring of 1937, Roberts left e Basie band because he wanted to return to California, but he rejoined it in 1942, pp. 29, 154; Albert McCarthy, "Basie's Other Tenor: The Herschel Evans Story," *Jazz and Blues* 1 (September/October 1971): 8-10. Count Basie (as told to Albert Murray), *Good Morning Blues: The Autobiography of Count Basie* (New York: Random House, 1980).

[48] Clayton, *Buck Clayton's Jazz World* , 30-65.

[49] Ibid., p. 81.

[50] Personal communication from Alice McGrath, who worked on the case; "The Granz Stand," *Metronome* 69 (November 1953), pp. 21-22.

[51] Author's interview with Lee Young; Freddy Doyle, "Swingtime in Hollywood," *California Eagle* (January 8, 1942): 2B.

[52] Lee Young, JOHP, Reel 4, pp. 6-7.

[53] Author's interview with Lee Young; Valerie Wilmer (as told to), "The Lee Young Story," *Jazz Journal* 13 (August 1960): 5; Freddy Doyle, "Orchestras and Musicians," *California Eagle* (February 3, 1938): 10A on what may have been his first studio position; he instructed six-year-old Billy Lee in drumming for a movie role. "Lee Young in Studios," *Down Beat* 23 (May 20, 1946): 6. In the 1946 Jazz at the Philharmonic in Los Angeles, the two brothers jammed on the bandstand with Charlie Parker—perhaps the last time that they played together; it was recorded: "Jazz at the Philharmonic/ Bird and Pres: The '46 Concerts" (Verve VE2-2516). For several years in the 1950s, Lee Young was music director for Nat Cole and played drums for the pianist-turned-singer.

[54] Lawrence Brown, JOHP Reel 2, p. 14 and Reel 3, p. 6. See Arthur Knight, "Jammin' the Blues, or the Sight of Jazz, 1944," Krin Gabbard (ed.), *Representing Jazz* (Durham, NC: Duke University, 1995): 11-69.

[55] Leonard G. Feather, "Jammin' the Blues," *Metronome* (April 1945): 14; "On Coast, You Hop Before You Jump," *Metronome* (March 1945): 8, 31. Meeker, #955. Author's interview with Barney Kessel October 25, 1983.

[56] James McFarline Ervin, "The Participation of the Negro in the Community Life of Los Angeles" (Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1931), p. 19; Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994):161-182. See also Douglas Henry Daniels, "Los Angeles Zoot: 'Race Riot,' the Pachuco, and Black Music Culture," *The Journal of Negro History* 82 (Spring): 201-220; Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995).

[57] Lawrence Brown, JOHP Reel 5, p. 10; Reel 3, p. 10.

[58] Author's interview with Irma Young; Shanta Nurullah, "Vi Redd: Interview," *Cadence* 3 No. 3 (January 1978): 3; Los Angeles City Directory, 1937, p. 921, gave Alma Hightower's address as 1553 East Thirty-third Street.

[59] Buddy Collette oral history interview, Central Avenue Sounds, Special Collections, UCLA Research Library, I, pp. 48ff, 51, 56, 75.

[60] See Marshal Royal, JOHP and Phillip Atteberry, "Marshal Royal: The Virtual Leader," *Coda Magazine* 263 (September/October 1995): 33-35.

[61] Buddy Collette, I, p. 27.

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[1] Joe Turner, "Blues on Central Avenue," in Steven Isobardi, "Central Avenue: Where the Jive Was on the Slide," liner notes, Central Avenue Sounds: Jazz in Los Angeles (1921-1956) (Los Angeles: Rhino Records, 1999).

[2] Clora Bryant, Buddy Collette, William Green, Steven Isobardi, Jack Kelson, Horace Tapscott, Gerald Wilson, and Marl Young, eds., *Central Avenue Sounds: Jazz in Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 20.

[3] Clora Bryant et al., *Central Avenue Sounds*, 31

TEACHING CALIFORNIA: PP 6–7

[1] "What's Going On—California and the Vietnam Era," Oakland Museum of California http://www.museumca.org/exhibit/exhi_whats_going_on.html

[2] Lindy G. Poling, The Real World: Community Speakers in the Classroom. Middle Level Learning. National Council for the Social Studies. May/June 2000, 8:8-10. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Echoes from the Wall: History, Learning and Leadership Through the Lens of the Vietnam War Era (1999): is available at www.teachvietnam.org.

REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

Zinfandel: A History of a Grape and its Wine

By Charles L. Sullivan (University of California, Berkeley, 2003, 224 pp., $24.95 cloth $15.95 paper) California Studies in Food and Culture 10.

REVIEWED BY JACK FAIRCHILD, NAPA VALLEY COLLEGE.

Henry L. Mencken's memoir of his newspaper days (published in 1993 as *My Life as Author and Editor*), describes how he survived Prohibition. His benefactress was actress Marguerite Clark. "One of the delights of dining at her house," relates Mencken, "was the table wine":

> a rich, very dark, Burgundy-like vintage that always appeared in a decanter. It took us a long time to worm its provenance out of her. Finally, she confessed with blushes that it came from California and that she bought it from a German wine-dealer in Hoboken. We demanded and got his name, and in a little while a large shipment was on its way from Hoboken to Baltimore. When the bill came in I was astonished to discover that the cost was thirty-five cents a quart—bottled! I sent in many orders thereafter, and when Prohibition came down in 1920 I had a large stock in my cellar. It was really excellent wine, and I worked it off as genuine Burgundy at many a party.

Whether or not the dark beauty from California that saved the Sage of Baltimore was Zinfandel is one of the few questions you will not find answered in Charles Sullivan's new book.

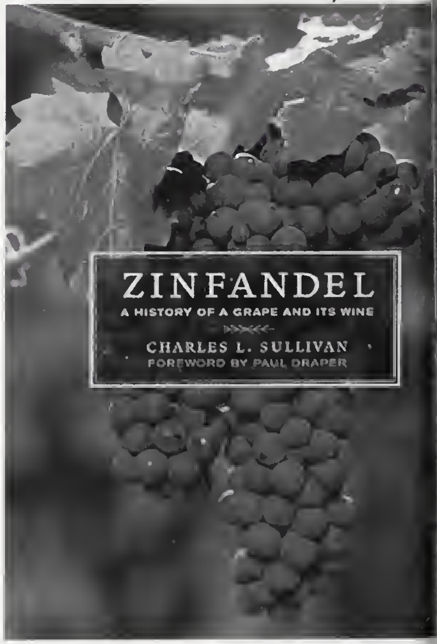
Author of *Napa Wine* (1994), *A Companion to California Wine* (1998), and other tomes, Sullivan has hit another vinous home run here. Originally serialized in the *Wayward Tendrils Quarterly*, the book is affectionately dedicated to that publication's founder, editor, and publisher, Gail Unzelman ("No Wayward Tendril"), whom Sullivan credits with inspiring his (and wife Roz's) Zin search.

That search is crafted around four "mysteries." The first, "Origins," thanks to University of California plant geneticist Carole Meredith, has now been laid to rest. *Crljenak kastelanski* is a grape native to Croatia. The Italians know it as primitivo, and we in the United States know it as Zinfandel. Slightly more complicated is the route of descent to the New World (Mystery 2). Sullivan believes the route to be from the Austrian imperial collection in Vienna to Long Island nurseryman George Gibbs (1820), thence to William Robert Prince, whose family had earlier established America's first commercial nursery in Flushing, New York.

William Robert Prince came to California in the 1850s, bringing the vine with him—as did Captain Frederick W. Macondray, a member of the Massachusetts Horticulture Society, who settled in San Francisco in 1852. Macondray gave the vine to his fellow New Englander Joseph W. Osborne, who had settled in Napa in 1851 (today's Trefethen Winery). Zinfandel had found a new home.

In Mystery 3 Sullivan turns detective to explain why Count Agoston Haraszthy, the man once thought to be the "Father of California Viticulture," wasn't. And finally, in solving Mystery 4, Sullivan tells the rest of the Zinfandel story—from junk grape to wine superstar—explaining how and why it happened.

So, pull up an easy chair, have your Riedel Zin stem at the ready, and repair to the cellar. Choose a bottle of your favorite, perhaps one of the exemplary Rs—Rafanelli, Ravenswood, Ridge, or Rosenblum. Pour yourself a glass of the dark beauty, sit back, relax, enjoy a great read, and savor Zinfandel.



RINT THE LEGEND: HOTOGRAPHY AND THE MERICAN WEST.

y Martha A. Sandweiss (Yale niversity Press, New Haven and ondon, 2002, xiii, 402 pp., $39.95 oth).

VIEWED BY WENDY WELKER, LIBRARIAN ND PHOTO ARCHIVIST, CALIFORNIA STORICAL SOCIETY.

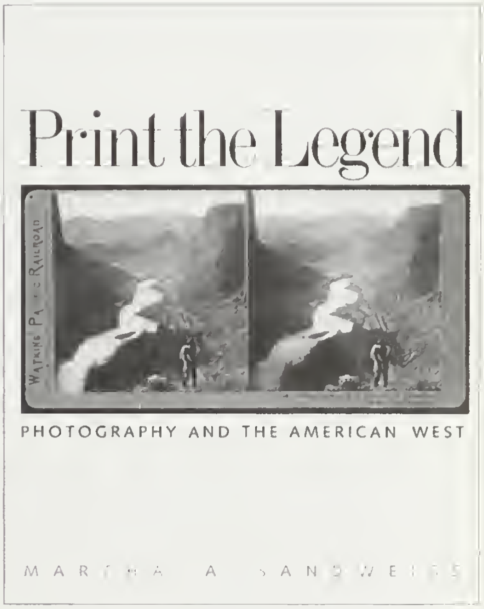
rint the Legend, Martha A. Sandeiss's exceptional account of hotography and the American West, a book about stories as much as it about the simultaneously unfoldig histories of a new medium and a ew place. In fact, Sandweiss mainins there is no separation; stories haped the way photographers aproached their subjects and stories etermined, and continue to deterine, how images are interpreted by ewers. The imposition of narrative as often led to far-reaching and nduring distortions of reality, but aradoxically, photography's ability elicit stories is what gives the medim its greatest value. Sandweiss onsiders her work a book of "picture ories," one in which she tells stories bout pictures, as they existed then nd now.

: took almost two decades for phoography to develop into the major nfluential force that would help hape the public image of the West. ineteenth century audiences were ddicted to the dramatic narrative of Vestern life presented by contempoary paintings and drawings. Only hen photography became a storyelling medium, employing some of the metaphorical aspects of paintings, was it able to compete in the marketplace with other types of visual images. Photographs gained value when they could summon a spirit of nationalism or heroism.

Beginning with an examination of the daguerreotypes of the Mexican-American War and closing with a selective survey of the nineteenth century illustrated book, Sandweiss delves into the ways in which American's pre-existing ideas and desires concerning the West influenced how photographs of the new territory would be made, marketed, and interpreted. Sandweiss also looks at how this evolution of pictorial representations of the West molded popular thinking about the very subjects they portrayed. For example, Sandweiss asserts that daguerreotypes of the Mexican-American War received a lackluster reaction and attributes this to their not being suggestive enough to either engage the American imagination or deliver a version of war the public wanted to see. It was not until the series photographs of railroads started combining text with images—adding another form of storytelling—that photographs began to impart the message about the dynamic future of the West and its boundless promise.

Americans' fixation on the future and heedlessness of the past, and often the present, is a thread running through much photography of the West. The railroad and landscape photographs portrayed the physical environment as the grand challenge of the West. Sandweiss adroitly reveals this notion of history as "oddly asocial." "Man would battle the elements. But there is scarcely any hint that he might also have to displace or battle or conquer other peoples." She writes that the great photographic vistas "helped persuade countless Americans that the essence of the West was not its social communities, not the interaction between its diverse peoples, but the physical landscape itself."

If the landscape photographs were the song of the future, the Native American photographs were the lament of a rapidly evaporating world. Sandweiss brings all her formidable clearsightedness and eloquence to bear on the subject of Native American images. She demonstrates that these



photographs were calculated to depict Indians as frozen in time and destined to fade from the modern world. The photographs perpetuate the fictitious vanishing race ideology by portraying Native Americans as incapable of adapting to changing circumstances. This subject has been written about before, though rarely with as much subtlety as it is here, but Sandweiss digs even deeper and excavates pieces of the picture hidden from view. Even though the majority of Indian photographs became "caught up in darker cultural narratives about race, Manifest Destiny, and the impending disappearance of native peoples," that does not mean that every photograph of an indigenous person depicts an act of cultural imperialism. Such a claim would deny any ambitions the sitter might have had, the ability of that sitter to comprehend the collaborative process of making portraits, and the discernment of how photographic portraits could avail personal needs. Sandweiss beautifully upends this viewpoint in her inquiry into various portraits (including a compelling look at Geronimo's involvement in the creation of his portraits), and by informing us that contemporary Native Americans attach new meaning to many of these photographs and see in them evidence of cultural resonance and the vibrancy of their inherited past.

With all of this shifting of meaning and myth-making going on, Sandweiss asks if photographs can serve as useful historical documents. Yes, they can, but not without the understanding that photographs are primary source documents, sources of meaning in and of themselves. They are too often used perfunctorily, as illustrations to support or accompany what has already been substantiated by other means. Sandweiss cautions that when photographs are removed from their historical context and viewed solely as isolated images they become less the substance of history than the "stuff of memory." Photographs are slippery in that they reveal as well as conceal. Masterpieces of illusion, photographs make viewers believe that because they are so tangible they are self-explanatory and their meanings are self-evident. All through *Print the Legend* Sandweiss shows this is never true. Photography's forte is description, not explanation. Photographs should not be taken at face value, they need to be understood as creations of the human imagination, as the products of selective evidence. Sandweiss asks the reader to guard against the unwavering temptation to allow particular photographs to represent general events, or, reciprocally, to let unidentified photographs represent the experience of particular individuals. That viewers have an instinctive empathy for photographic subjects means they can be lured into believing they know more than they can truly know about the actual subjects of photographs.

To Sandweiss, the problematic aspect of nineteenth century western photographs as historical documents is also what makes them worthy and powerful. That they evoke imagination and sympathy and exert an irresistible pull between the past and present proves they help us to imagine other pasts. For Sandweiss, the greatest significance of these photographs lies not in the physical information they impart but in the ways in which they bring forth stories from their viewers. These amazing elusory images are a conduit, "instructing us in ways to flee the constraints of the present." *Print the Legend* expertly shows that the stories told in the making of these photographs, and those that have resulted from them, have much to tell us about the ways Americans see themselves and their world.

L.A. CITY LIMITS: AFRICAN AMERICAN LOS ANGELES FROM THE GREAT DEPRESSION TO THE PRESENT

By Josh Sides (University of California Press, Berkeley, 2004, 302 pp., $39.95 cloth).

REVIEWED BY LAWRENCE B. DE GRAAF, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY EMERITUS, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON.

This book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on Los Angeles and its diverse peoples. It is a history of the city's black population from the early twentieth century on, with an emphasis on its changing socioeconomic condition and the political and organizational developments that helped shape it. Covering the relations of African Americans with whites and the black community itself, the book begins with Los Angeles before the war, especially the Great Depression, d continues into the Great Migration World War II. The following three apters are the heart of the book. ne recounts the promise of Los ngeles as a source of manufactur- g jobs between World War II and e 1960s and the varying opportu- ties blacks actually enjoyed. Housing nditions are well summarized, in- uding the bifurcation of the African merican community between a wer and middle class in separate sidential areas. The role of protest ovements and government policies breaking down racial barriers is so well covered.

des does an excellent job of com- ning previous scholarship and iginal research. Such community stories are often either impersonal alysis or collective biographies, des presents a balance of the major cioeconomic forces affecting black ngelenos, particularly the rise and cline of manufacturing in the city, d vignettes on representative ersons and organizations. Some andard interpretations, such as the atts Riot as a major turning point d the insignificance of leftist rganizations, are convincingly vised. Readers will enjoy the clear, ften eloquent style and the excellent ansitions between subchapters. he text is augmented by maps of e black community over time and xtensive endnotes and bibliography.

he main disappointment may be e very brief treatment of the period fter 1970. The twenty years of radley's administration are covered one page. Sides does a good job of working Mexican Americans into earlier decades, but multi-ethnic comparisons fade as the diversity of Los Angeles increases. An understandable focus on the city of Los Angeles and immediately adjacent cities allows only passing reference to the movement of many black Angelenos to other parts of southern California and its implications. The emphasis on economic and demographic change and political actions leaves little room for cultural trends and institutions, nor for African American contributions to Los Angeles arts and entertainment.

These are minor shortcomings in what is otherwise a solid work of scholarship. Josh Sides has given Los Angeles a modern history of its African American population that should stand for years as a standard work on that subject, and a foundation for comparative studies of other communities and ethnic experiences.

JAPANESE AMERICAN CELEBRATION AND CONFLICT: A HISTORY OF ETHNIC IDENTITY AND FESTIVAL IN LOS ANGELES, 1934–1990

By Lon Kurashige (University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002, 296 pp., $45 cloth, $18.95 paper).

REVIEWED BY ROGER DANIELS, AUTHOR OF *PRISONERS WITHOUT TRIAL: JAPANESE AMERICANS IN WORLD WAR II* AND *POLITICS OF PREJUDICE: THE ANTI-JAPANESE MOVEMENT IN CALIFORNIA.*

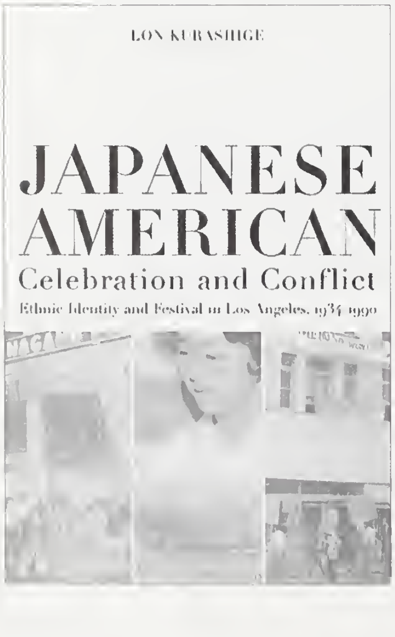
Cultural history has recently and belatedly arrived in Japanese American scholarship. Happily, Lon Kurashige's study of an ethnic festival, Los Angeles' Nisei Week, is, unlike so much in that field, based upon sound historical research. He analyzes, often with great subtlety, the complex and changing relationships between local Nisei leaders, the white power structure, and much of the rest of Japanese American society in southern California, from the mid-1930s until 1990.

For the merchants of Little Tokyo, Nisei Week was a way of stimulating business and of getting Nisei to shop largely within the community, as their parents had done. But Nisei Week was also, as Kurashige makes clear, an important statement by some community leaders of the "Americanness" of the second generation. As he puts it:

> Although economically inclined, this festival was not just a device to spur consumption in Little Tokyo, nor was it merely an excuse to improve public relations for a racially marked minor-

> ity or even to groom and discipline the ethnic community. Nisei Week, to be sure, was all of these things, but at heart it began as an open text for members of the second generation to understand themselves and their role as the progeny of a historic admixture of Japanese and American civilizations. [p. 41]

It is, however, too much to claim that "the trajectory of Nisei Week . . . is, to a great extent, the trajectory of urban Japanese American history" (p. 11). Such history needs to be concerned with many matters not treated at length here: employment, residence, neighborhoods, and religion. It is striking, I think, that there is no reference to Buddhism in the index, although there is one to "Buddhahead cars" as well as a tabulation of the religious preferences of Japanese American Citizens League members. Finally, Nisei Week is treated as an event without ancestors. I wonder, for example, if there are any connections between the extraordinary community activities to support Japan's athletes at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics and the push for Nisei Week, which began less than two years later.



These observations in no way vitiate what is an important contribution to the history of the Japanese American metropolis. Nisei Week is used as a device to trace key stages in the evolution of Japanese American community attitudes through the period of the Vietnam War and beyond. In doing this Kurashige throws light on relatively unknown events and personalities such as the Nisei journalist George Yoshinaga. And there are fresh and pertinent illustrations; I found the picture of the coronation of the 1938 Nisei Queen at the Biltmore Hotel surrounded by young people in dinner dance finery particularly poignant. Three years later, in the wake of Pearl Harbor, Navy Secretary Frank Knox would hold a press conference there blaming the disaster on Japanese American treachery, beginning the campaign by civilian leaders of the American military that led to the incarceration of most of those young people.

Kurashige's work, along with John Modell's *The Economics and Politics of Racial Accommodation: The Japanese of Los Angeles, 1900–1942* (1977), constitutes the best account we have of Japanese Los Angeles in the twentieth century. We badly need comparable works about other West Coast cities.

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND RACIAL ANXIETY IN THE UNITED STATES, 1848–82

By Najia Aarim-Heriot (University of Illinois Press, Champaign, 2003, 291 pp., $39.95 cloth).

REVIEWED BY S. F. CHUNG, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS.

What factors led to the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act? Najia Aarim-Heriot's thought-provoking, well-argued study focuses upon American racial attitudes and practices, influenced by other aspects such as the driving force in the discriminatory federal legislation against the Chinese. By studying national newspapers and magazines, court cases, political parties, and congressional debates, she examines the changing political attitudes regarding immigration in general, labor unions, class, nativism, and the fear of Chinese immigrants as potential citizens and voters. More important, she links the nineteenth-century questions of African American slavery, civil rights and labor issues with the plight of the Chinese immigrants. An understanding of the national scene is directly linked to the developments in California. "In the minds of California legislators . . . the Chinese and Negro questions were closely connected" (p. 39).

The "Chinese problem" was not simply a "western" controversy but a

ational one that had its origins in
ebates over what constituted the
merican (white) identity. Restrictions
laced on the African Americans
om immigration, testimony rights,
ducation, and miscegenation were
xtended to the Chinese through the
arly 1860s. With the end of the
ivil War, congressional leaders had
 deal with questions of race, espe-
ially during the debates over the
ourteenth and Fifteenth amendments.
acial animosity toward all nonwhites,
specially toward the Chinese, who
ad grown in number in California
nd other western states by 1870,
merged as a dominant theme. The
ssues of citizenship and suffrage
ranted to African Americans were
enied to the Chinese as racial double
tandards emerged. This paved the way
or the reconsideration of the status
f African Americans and the "Asiani-
ation" of the "Negro question" (p. 155)

he anti-Chinese movement intensi-
ed between 1874 and 1880. Although
e Workingmen's Party of California
nd other anti-Chinese organizations
ultiplied in number and influence,
acial prejudice, not economics, was
he driving force of the hostility.
olitical and community leaders felt
hat nonwhites could not meld into
he American social fabric. During
his period former supporters of the
Chinese question" changed sides and
avored anti-Chinese legislation. The
hinese were objectionable because
hey could not assimilate, were hea-
hens, and had many undesirable
hysical and cultural traits. There
vas a fear among political leaders
hat if the Chinese gained political
ower, they might influence American
politics adversely. Government leaders felt that it was "neither possible nor desirable" for the whites and Chinese "to live under the same government" (p. 197). The congressional debates between 1879 and 1882 led to the passage of the first of several Chinese exclusion acts and other restrictive measures that made the Chinese very vulnerable to numerous injustices.

This is a very important study with very few weaknesses. Although she mentions the plight of Native Americans with the Chinese and African Americans, she does not develop this other important factor of racism. Her discussion of Chinese women would have been improved with the inclusion of information from Judy Yung, Huping Ling, and others. There are few errors, but the most glaring is the statement, "The Chinese did not experience the most extreme outrages perpetrated on southern blacks—such as fraud, extreme violence, and murder" (p. 82). She makes some excellent points, especially in showing how many politicians and newspaper editors switched from supporting the Chinese to opposing them. She raises some thought-provoking issues, including the continuation of stereotypes and misconceptions. Thus editor William Burwell's fear of the "Mongolising of the Americans" in 1869 reminds one of the 1986 educational film, "Asianization of America."

I highly recommend this book to historians, political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists. With the recent conferences at Cornell and Boston University on the intersections of Asians and blacks, we might see more studies along this line giving us a fuller understanding of what transpired.

VIOLA MARTINEZ: CALIFORNIA PAIUTE

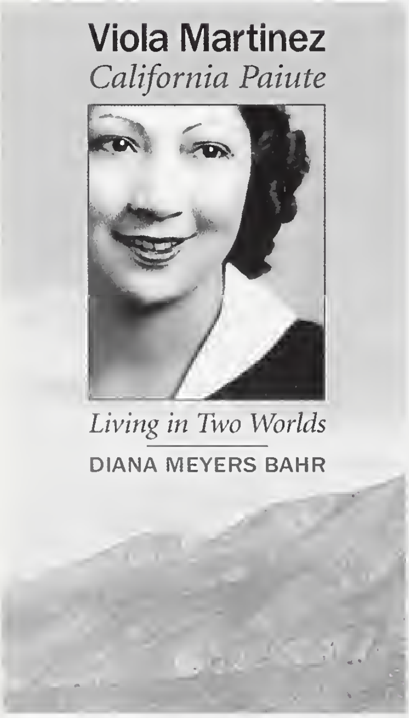
By Diana Meyers Bahr (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2003, 202 pp., $29.95 cloth).

REVIEWED BY VALERIE SHERER MATHES, AUTHOR OF *HELEN HUNT JACKSON AND HER INDIAN REFORM LEGACY* (1990).

"Marginal people" by definition live in two antagonistic cultures. This well-written narrative shows how Viola Martinez, an enrolled member of the Bishop Band of Owens Valley Paiutes, used her marginality "not as confinement, but as an opportunity to grow" (p. 6), thus triumphing over "assaults on her identity by walking creatively in both worlds" (p. 12). She openly embraced new ways without abandoning the old.

The self-sufficiency of her people was violently disrupted by the arrival of mountain men, miners, cattle ranchers, homesteaders, and finally tourists, several of whom stole one of Viola's sisters. The purchase of vast tracts of Owens Valley land by the city of Los Angeles to ensure a continual source of water for its expanding population worsened the already critical condition of the Paiutes. Eventually, three federal reservations were created for them.

Viola's journey from the Owens Valley to Los Angeles is a remarkable one. Orphaned by her mother's death in the 1918 flu epidemic, she accompanied an aunt on a seasonal horse and buggy trade route trading with Basque shepherds and others. When her uncles decided to send her to Sherman Institute in Riverside, the largest of the federal boarding schools for Native Americans, she remained there for twelve years, returning home only once to accompany the casket of a niece. Despite hours furtively speaking with other Paiutes, Viola lost the ability to speak her own language because of the school's English-only policy. Worse yet, she once overheard a Sherman school matron comment to a prospective employer that Indian children were trained "to take care of other people's houses and toilets" (p. 63).



Viola Martinez
California Paiute

Living in Two Worlds
DIANA MEYERS BAHR

Determined to prove this matron wrong, Viola attended Riverside Polytechnic High School in her senior year, then the local junior college, and finally Santa Barbara State College. Better educated than many whites, Viola found employment as a social worker in Los Angeles, an office manager of the Bishop Indian Agency, a manager of a housing project for the Federal Housing Authority, and finally an employment counselor at the Manzanar War Relocation Center. Following her marriage to a fellow Paiute and the adoption of two children, Viola served as president of a parent-teacher association, worked for the Department of Charities in Los Angeles and, finally, as a teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District. To serve the Indian community, she helped establish the American Indian Education Commission and the Native American Ministry in southern California.

This book, liberally sprinkled throughout with Viola's first-person voice, is the narrative of a remarkable Paiute Indian woman who created an "ethical vision that looked to the future while drawing on the past" (p. 156) enabling her to navigate from the horse and buggy days to a distinguished teaching career—proof that living in two antagonistic worlds is possible. For readers interested in other Indian women's journeys through the white educational system and the "threat of cultural alienation" (p. 159), the author includes a valuable review of a dozen autobiographies.

Silicon Valley, Women, and the California Dream: Gender, Class, and Opportunity in the Twentieth Century

By Glenna Matthews (Stanford University Press, 2003, 313 pp., $22.95, cloth).

REVIEWED BY ERIC J. VETTEL, POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY.

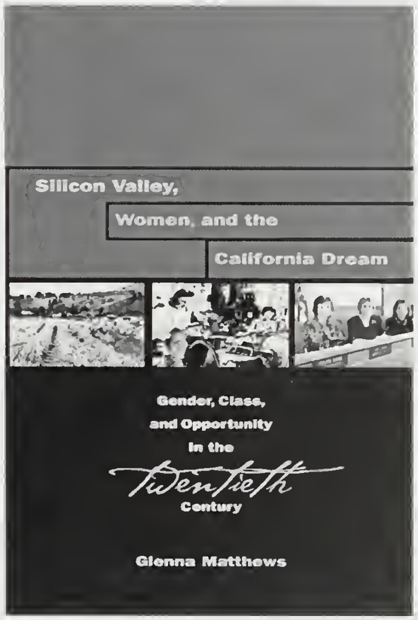
Glenna Matthews joins a growing number of scholars whose work serves as a reminder that there is another side to Silicon Valley. Popular culture knows Silicon Valley as the region that has produced phenomenal technological achievements, a new economy, and a few fabulously wealthy individuals. Matthews, however, inscribes a second and vividly contrasting image that highlights the experiences of the forgotten masses, long huddled on the margins of this region and its history. Her Silicon Valley is not inhabited by cooing doves of industrial management, noble eagles taking calculated entrepreneurial risks, or unblinking owls of far-visioned municipal governments, but is inhabited by heartless ravens and taloned vultures of predatory capitalism. According to Matthews, this is not the modern-day home of Horatio Alger but of Gorgon—a ruthless center in which capitalists repeatedly trample on their hapless foes.

To part the veil on the sanctity of Silicon Valley, Matthews takes the reader on a "journey through the history of Santa Clara Valley, from the late nineteenth century to the end of

e twentieth century," with a careful
e toward the plight of working-class
d immigrant women. She addresses
›t only their extraordinary burdens,
:t a full wallet of other imposing chal-
ıges and disappointments, includ-
g the fruitlessness of union activity
the canneries, the exploitation of
exican-Americans farm workers
the *bracero* program, and the decline
blue-collar employment in high-
:hnology industry.

atthews serves as a knowledgeable
ıide on this journey into an indus-
al tempest. She discusses the fruit
dustry, its female workers, and their
forts to organize; the rise of a high-
:ch production workforce and its
ıpact on women; the rise of femi-
st activism in the 1960s; and her
ıradigm of conflict between demo-
atic and economic equality by study-
g the experiences of under-skilled
male workers caught in the clutch
a global economy. She is clearly at
ːr best and most comfortable when
ixing biography and oral history with
ıion activities and explicating arcane
atters of industrial production
ocesses and their relationship to
e distribution of power.

atthews' book is, to a great extent,
morality play that offers little in the
ay of analysis. Like the industrial
nter that she attempts to chronicle,
atthews' study loses majesty as it
cks up speed. She dutifully records
e plight of working-class women in
e Santa Clara Valley throughout the
/entieth century, but her argument
redundant, and specialists in the
field will not find much that is new. The few deep insights into this curious world do not fulfill the stated objectives in the title and introduction. Indeed, this is not a study of "gender" or "class" but a story that focuses on the burdens shouldered by certain women. Matthews certainly takes the story further than most—she occasionally notes internal conflict between industrial managers and city officials—but precisely how this more complex story relates to gender and class is unresolved. Moreover, Matthews perceptively notes the uniqueness of this region but repeats the same revisionist story told many times before—powerful capitalists exploit the underprivileged. If Matthews wants to provide a deeper understanding of power and privilege in Silicon Valley, it remains obscure.


Silicon Valley,
Women, and the
California Dream
Gender, Class,
and Opportunity
in the
Twentieth
Century
Glenna Matthews

The book succeeds as a momentary glimpse into Silicon Valley's darker side, to a degree that instructors might want to use it in the classroom as a supplemental text. Many readers may find the book unsatisfying because of its heavy moral tone and one-sidedness; that reasonable dissatisfaction should serve as convincing evidence to use the text as a springboard in which to dive into uncharted analytical waters and drift along in engaging class discussion.

GIFTS FROM THE CELESTIAL KINGDOM: A SHIPWRECKED CARGO FOR GOLD RUSH CALIFORNIA

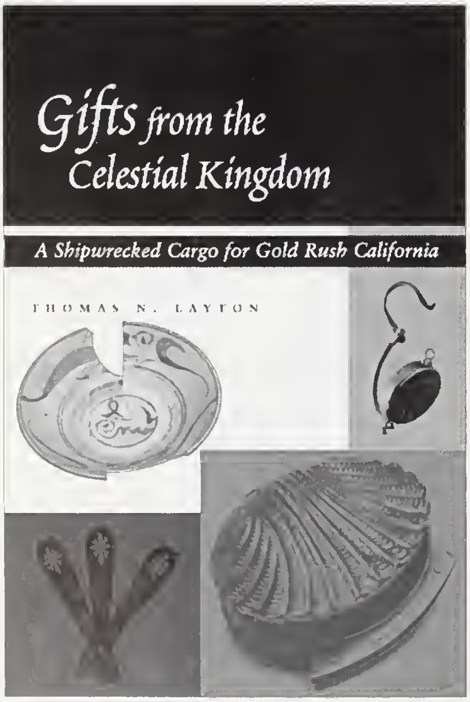
By Thomas N. Layton (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002. 269 pp., $21.95 cloth).

REVIEWED BY JOSEPH L. CHARTKOFF, DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY AND CO-EDITOR OF *THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF CALIFORNIA* (1984).

Gifts for the Celestial Kingdom provides a well-crafted and innovative infusion of archaeological and historical research to enrich the fairly modest body of knowledge about the impact of maritime trade with China on the culture of Gold Rush California—and especially about the evolution of Chinese immigrant culture in California as the Gold Rush progressed. This extremely readable book provides an interpretive analysis of the cargo carried by the sailing ship *Frolic* on its final voyage from China before it sank in a storm on the rocky shore off Point Cabrillo, some eighty miles north of San Francisco, in 1850.

Layton, a professor of anthropology at California State University, Fresno, has developed a distinguished career as an archaeologist of California's prehistoric cultures for more than three decades. His involvement with the wreck of the *Frolic* emerged as a sidenote to his study of Native American village archaeology in Marin County when shards of Chinese pottery were found in early historic village sites. The subject drew him onward in many unforeseen ways, however, In 1997 he published a major report, *The Voyage of the Frolic*; this is a companion volume analyzing the wreck's cargo and its significance.

Layton's book lies in the domain of historical archaeology. Because historical documentation and archaeological data both provide incomplete and limited records for the human past, their combination can provide a richer undestanding of the histories of the times and places under study than either approach tends to provide by itself. Archaeologists have been contributing to the study of historical periods for quite some time, so Layton's book is not new in that regard. Most studies by historical archaeologists, however, focus on the excavation of sites. Layton's book provides an interesting departure from that approach because he has had to concentrate on the materials that came from the wreck site rather than the wreck itself. In doing so, he has gotten much farther into the relevant historical records and documentation that most historical archaeologists usually do. Yet his study is still essentially archaeological rather than historical because its core centers on the materials remains associated with the wreck of the *Frolic* rather than being a literature-based analysis in itself. Historians will therefore find this approach somewhat alien from their own, but still should find a great deal of interest and engagement with it.


Gifts from the Celestial Kingdom
A Shipwrecked Cargo for Gold Rush California
THOMAS N. LAYTON

Gifts from the Celestial Kingdom also reflects some significant postmodernist approaches without adopting a complete postmodern philosophy. Much of the book centers on Layton's personal experiences researching the *Frolic's* cargo. He has related in very engaging prose his personal experiences, his discoveries, his questions and problems, so readers can readily follow his intellectual progress. He has also made substantial use of the method of identifying past historical characters associated with the ship and its cargo and providing them with dialogue for first-person as well as third-person expressions of their perspectives.

Key to the story, and gradually revealed in the presentations, is the story of immigrants from China who started to settle in California before the Gold Rush, becoming members of the compelex social systems developing there in the 1840s, and who became increasingly isolated and marginalized after the onset of the Gold Rush. Connections between the evolution of cultural patterns in California and the dynamics of the systems of those days in China and India are not often emphasized in our literature. Instructors will find much to discuss and evaluate in Layton's analysis, while students and general readers will find it a very engaging and enlightening work.

Ernest Thayer &

"Casey at the Bat,"

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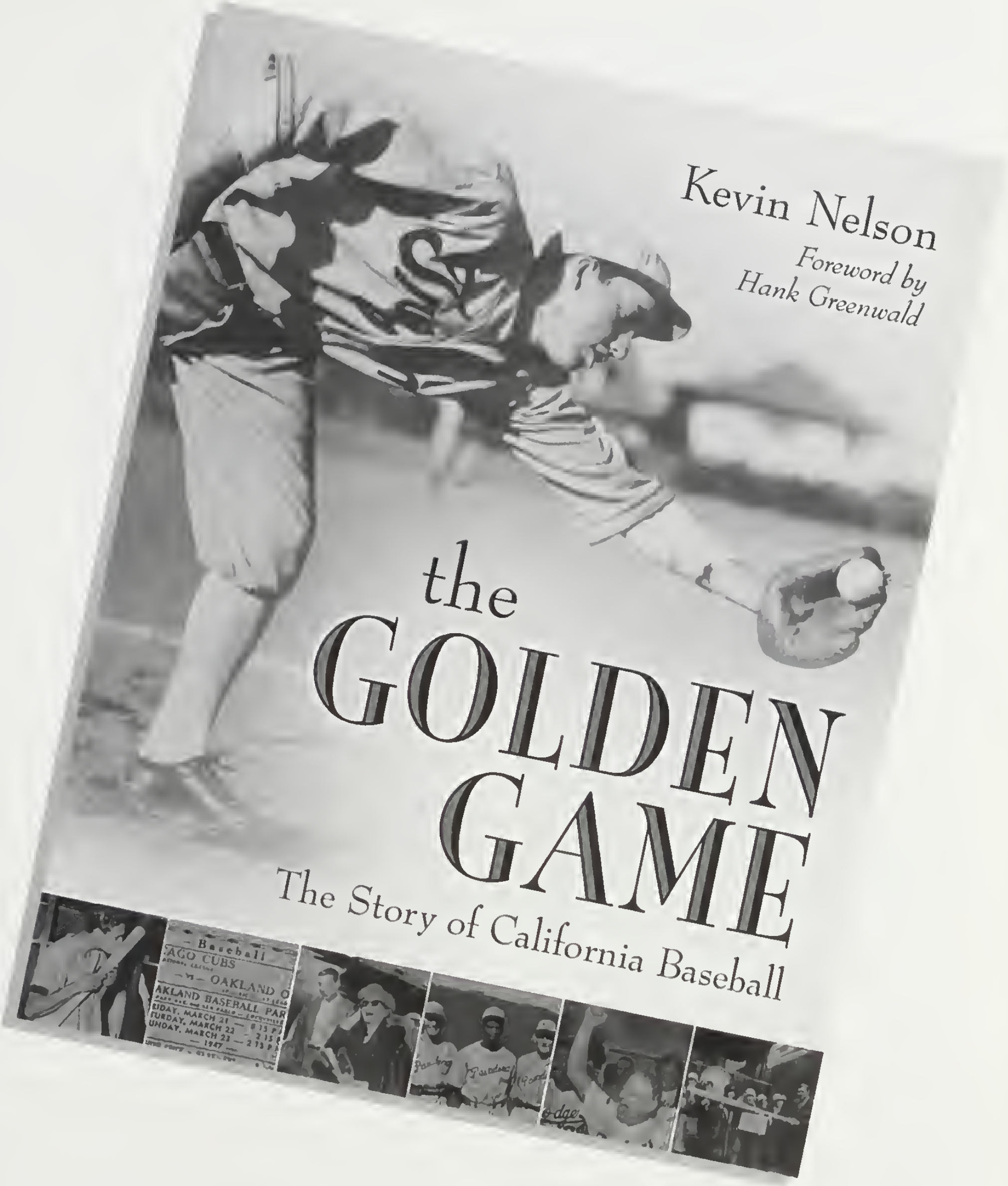
Dizzy Dean



aseball and the Gold Rush, Ernest Thayer and "Casey at the Bat," baseball crook Hal Chase, Joe DiMaggio, Ted Williams, Jackie obinson and integration, crusty Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth and Hollywood baseball movies, Satchel Paige versus Dizzy Dean, Kenichi enimura and the Japanese American experience, Sparky Anderson, Gene Autry, Willie Mays, Tommy Lasorda, and the rise of the baby oom generation of players—all of these people and stories are part of the incredible saga of California baseball and how it has haped the national pastime.

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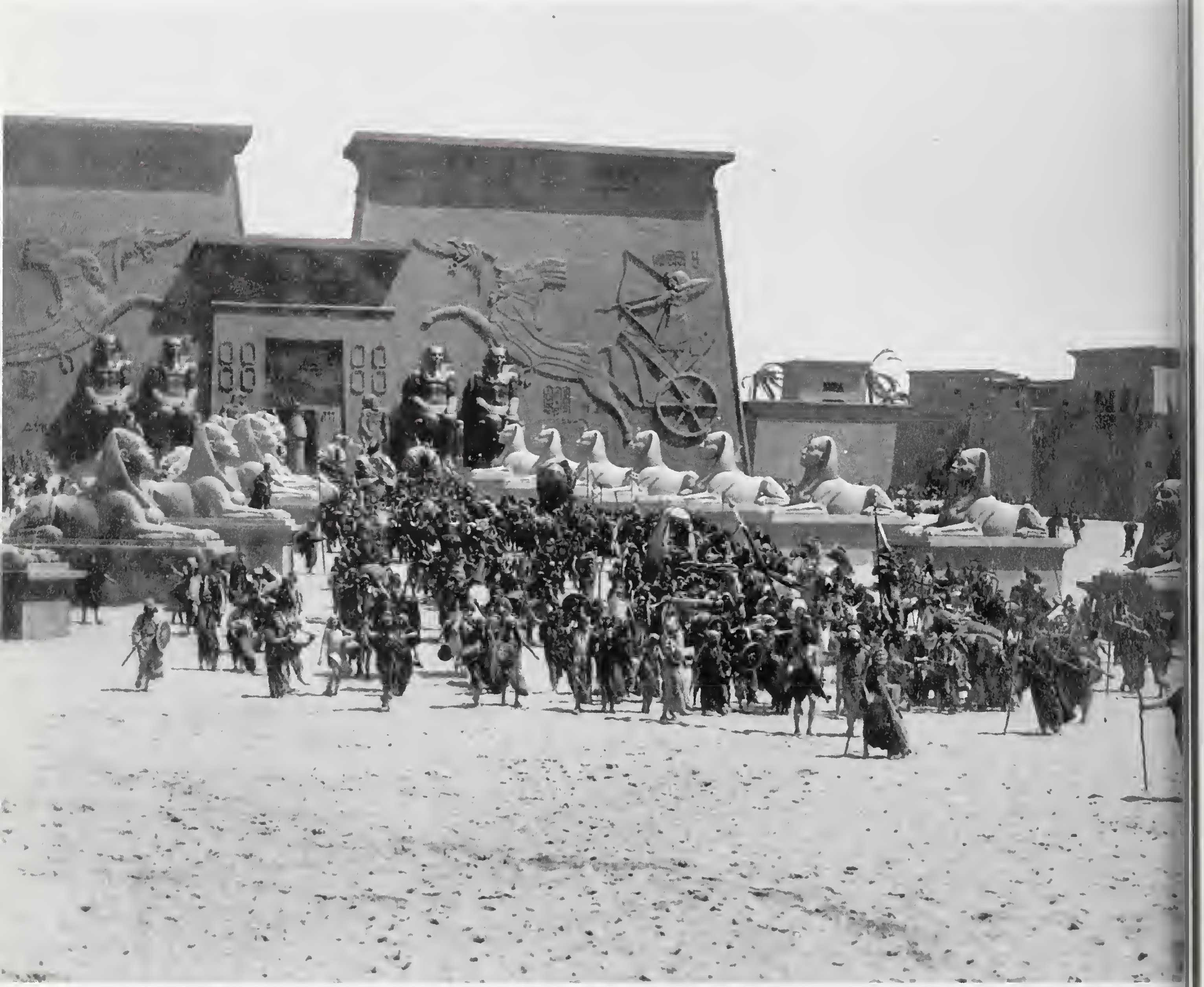

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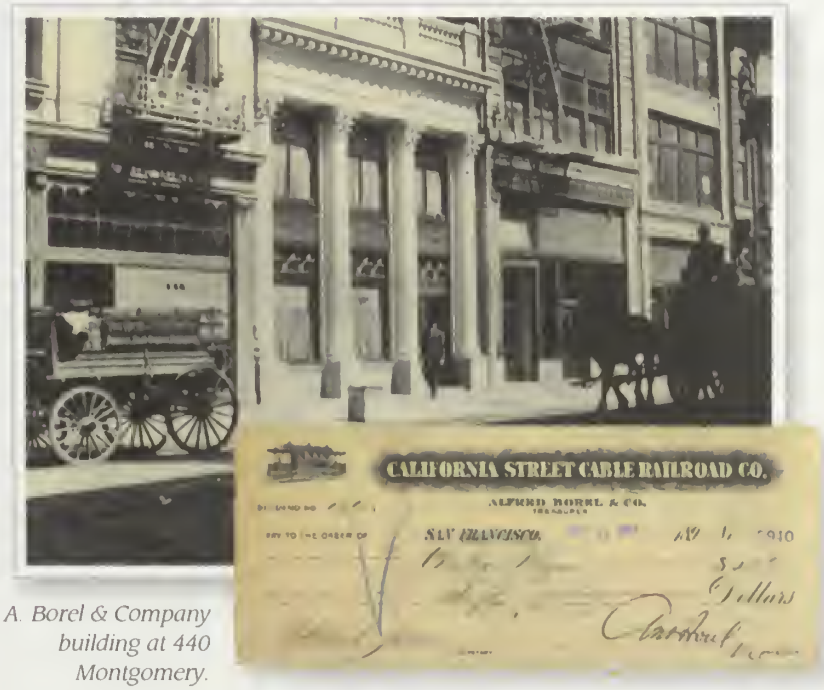

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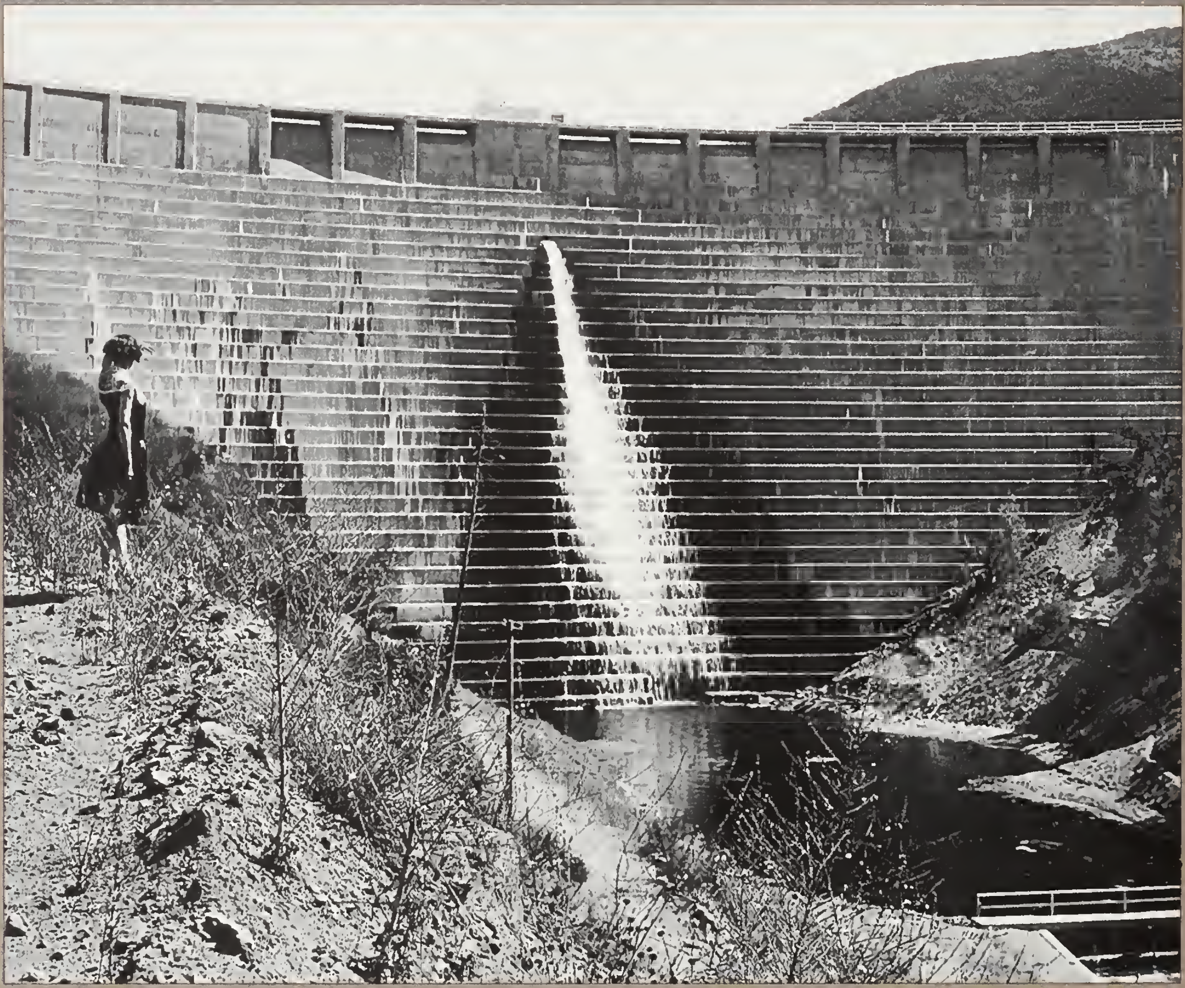

The completed St. Francis Dam, Spring 1927. This view taken by a photographer for the Automobile Club of Southern California, with the help of a model (perhaps an "aspiring actress"), documents a new and distinctive destination that Los Angeles motorists could visit on an afternoon drive into the city's rural hinterlands.

AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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